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SKETCHES

OF THE

HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN ART.

VOLUME II.

SKETCHES

OF THE

HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN ART.

BY LORD LINDSAY.

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CONTENTS OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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PERIOD I.

ARCHITECTURE.

PAGE

I. LOMBARD AND GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE..... 1

II. SCULPTURE OF THE LOMBARDS, &c..... 41

III. NICCOLA PISANO AND HIS SCHOOL..... 99

IV. GIOTTO AND HIS SCHOOL..... 159

LETTER I.

LOMBARD AND GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.

In the preceding Letters, I have attempted to give you some idea of the Christian Art of Greece and Rome, the aged sovereigns of the elder world; in these that follow, I shall do my best to show you how their heirs, the youthful Europeans, availed themselves of the legacy, threw their own glowing life into the ideas and forms thus bequeathed to them, and either combined them afresh, or created new ones out of the riches of Nature and of their own Souls.

I shall divide the ensuing Series into five grand divisions or periods,—the First, and of longest duration, extending from the middle of the sixth to the middle of the fifteenth century, during which Spirit, or Christianity, ruled supreme, and found its chief expression in Architecture,—the Second, embracing the latter half of the fifteenth century, during which Christianity battled with the pride of Intellect and resuscitated paganism, while Sculpture was perfected

in the struggle,—the Third, extending from the close of the fifteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century, which witnessed the results of the struggle, good and bad, in the successive triumphs of Spirit, Intellect, and Sense, Expression, Design, and Colouring, in Painting, the peculiar handmaid and exponent of Christianity,—the Fourth, expiring with the eighteenth century, signalised by the various attempts to regenerate Art through Sense and Intellect, Colour and Design,—and the Fifth and last, dating from the commencement of the present century, characterised by a similar revival through Spirit, or Expression, and a recurrence to first principles, to the Christianity and Nationality of Romano-Teutonic Europe.

The rise and progress of Sculpture and Painting will of course demand their due consideration under the first as under the later of these periods; meanwhile it is to the development and character of the Lombard and Pointed, or Gothic Architecture, both in Italy and the North, that I address myself in the present Letter.

SECTION 1. *Lombard Architecture, South and North of the Alps.*

I need not remind you that the freedom of the North, the civilization of the South, and the Christianity of the East, are the three elements from the commixture of which the character and history of Europe spring, and that Italy was the field where

those elements first met, and began to amalgamate.*

The invasion of the Lombards, in 568, may be considered as the last preliminary step to this consummation. They were a noble race, of pure morals, and bold, manly, generous and even romantic character, presenting the strongest possible contrast to the corrupt and degenerate Romans, whom they held personally in utter contempt, and refused to mingle with on the familiar footing of their predecessors, the Goths. It was therefore from the Church rather than the natives of Rome and Italy that they derived their civilization, and to the Popes accordingly they paid a free but a zealous deference, which rendered them invaluable adherents in any course of policy the latter might find it expedient to pursue.

The Papacy, at the commencement of the seventh century, was in a very different position from that in which Constantine had left her. In doctrine, indeed, she was but little changed, for almost every peculiar dogma of Catholicism had been either openly asserted, or indirectly implied, before the close of the fourth century. But during the last three hundred years the seed of spiritual despotism, wrapt up in the acorn of the Nicene Church, had silently but rapidly shot up into a mighty tree, and before the death of the First Gregory not only had the theory been matured and the principles laid down by which ecclesiastical supremacy was to be claimed and established

* Influentially, I mean, on the future; the civilization of the Visigoths in Spain was earlier, but led to nothing.

over the Kings of the earth, but the minds of men had been prepared to acquiesce in the usurpation. An opportunity for asserting that supremacy was not long in presenting itself.

The propriety of the adoration of images, an abuse at that time of almost universal prevalence in Christendom, had been long agitated in the Greek Church. In 726, the Emperor Leo III. declared it unlawful by a special edict, which he followed up by an indiscriminate destruction of images throughout his Eastern dominions, calling at the same time on the Popes in Italy, his subject province, to follow his example of reformation. Gregory II., then occupant of the papal chair, refused obedience, and, finding his remonstrances unattended to, proceeded—under the sanction of a decree subscribed by a synod of ninety-three Italian bishops, and backed by the ready swords of the Lombards—to excommunicate in one sweeping anathema, the whole body of the Iconoclasts, the Emperor himself not excepted, and to pronounce Italy politically independent of the Byzantine Empire. It was a step, before God and man alike, indefensible—at once schismatical and rebellious. But—from that hour a new star dawned on the horizon, infant Europe was separated from the womb, life awoke in her, the warm blood was sent thrilling through her veins, that impulse was communicated to which she owes her growth and development, her virtue and her glory—a crime was, in short, overruled by providence to the good of mankind.

The results of the measure were not so imme-

diately apparent as might have been expected. The revolution was peaceably effected. Greece, after a short struggle, acquiesced in it, and long continued to retain her maritime dependencies, and even a nominal supremacy in the peninsula, the policy of the Popes leaving a shadow of power to the Emperors, after securing the substance to themselves. Under their rule in the South, and that of the Lombards North of the Apennines, and after the extinction of the latter dynasty, under that of Charlemagne and his Carlovingian successors, Italy enjoyed repose and tranquillity till the middle of the ninth century, when a period of anarchy and misery ensued for a hundred and fifty years.

It is from the settlement of the Lombards and the Iconoclast rupture therefore, and not from the reign of Charlemagne, that the life of Modern Europe, civil and ecclesiastical, properly dates,* and we find accordingly in the Lombard Architecture and Sculpture, the earliest voice and expression of that life—witnessed in the former by new combinations and a more ample development of the spirit of symbolism —in the latter by a profusion of imagery, remarkable even before the quarrel, but absolutely redundant after

* See for the character of the Lombards, Gibbon, chap. 45, and for the Iconoclast rupture, chap. 49.—"La conquête des Lombards," says Sismondi, "fut, en quelque sorte, pour l'Italie, l'époque de la renaissance des peuples. Des principautés indépendantes, des communautés, des républiques, commencèrent à se constituer de toutes parts; et un principe de vie fut rendu à cette contrée, long-temps ensevelie dans un sommeil léthargique." —*Hist. des Republ. Ital.* tom. i, p. 9.

it. We will discuss these sculptures in a future letter; meanwhile I shall describe as briefly as possible the principal characteristics of the new architecture, as exhibited in the Lombard Cathedral.

These characteristics are of various origin, but easily discriminated. The three most prominent features, the eastern aspect of the sanctuary, the cruciform plan, and the soaring octagonal cupola, are borrowed from Byzantium, the latter in an improved form, the cross with a difference, the nave, or arm opposite the sanctuary, being lengthened so as to resemble the supposed shape of the actual instrument of suffering, and form what is now distinctively called the Latin Cross. The crypt and absis, or tribune, are retained from the Roman basilica, but the absis is generally pierced with windows, and the crypt is much loftier and more spacious, assuming almost the appearance of a subterranean church. The columns of the nave, no longer isolated, are clustered so as to form compound piers, massive and heavy—their capitals either a rude imitation of the Corinthian, or, especially in the earlier structures, sculptured with grotesque imagery.* Triforia, or galleries for women, frequently line the nave and transepts. The roof is of stone, and vaulted. The narthex, or portico, for excluded penitents, common alike to the Greek and Roman churches, and in them continued along the whole façade of entrance, is dispensed with

* Sometimes indeed, but rarely, the insulated column of the early church is restored.

altogether in the oldest Lombard ones,* and when afterwards resumed, in the eleventh century, was restricted to what we should now call Porches, over each door, consisting generally of little more than a canopy open at the sides, and supported by slender pillars, resting on sculptured monsters. Three doors admit from the western front; these are generally covered with sculpture, which frequently extends in belts across the façade, and even along the sides of the building. Above the central door is usually seen, in the later Lombard churches, a S. Catherine's-wheel window. The roof slants at the sides, and ends in front, sometimes in a single pediment, sometimes in three gables answering to the three doors; while, in Lombardy at least, hundreds of slender pillars, of every form and device—those immediately adjacent to each other frequently interlaced in the true lover's knot, and all supporting round or trefoliate arches—run along, in continuous galleries, under the eaves, as if for the purpose of supporting the roof—run up the pediment in front, are continued along the side-walls and round the eastern absis, and finally engirdle the cupola. Sometimes the western front is absolutely covered with these galleries, rising tier above tier. Though introduced merely for ornament, and therefore on a vicious principle, these fairy-like colonnades win very much on one's affections. I may add to these general

* A significant fact, and prophetic of the tendency and the destinies of the Medo-Persian or Teutonic *versus* the Hindoo element of Europe.

features the occasional and rare one, seen to peculiar advantage in the cathedral of Cremona, of numerous slender towers, rising, like minarets, in every direction, in front and behind, and giving the east end, especially, a marked resemblance to the mosques of the Mahometans.

The Baptistery and the Campanile, or bell-tower, are in theory invariable adjuncts to the Lombard cathedral, although detached from it. I have already noticed these buildings, as well as the principal churches built by the Lombards in the old basilica form, under the head of Latin architecture. But I may remark, that the Lombards seem to have built them with peculiar zest, and to have had a keen eye for the picturesque in grouping them with the churches they belong to.

I need scarcely add, that the round arch is exclusively employed in pure Lombard architecture.*

To translate this new style into its symbolical language is a pleasurable task.

The three doors and three gable ends signify the Trinity, the Catherine-wheel window (if I mistake not) the Unity, as concentrated in Christ, the Light of the Church, from whose Greek monogram its shape was probably adopted.† The monsters that support the pillars of the porch stand there as talismans to frighten away evil spirits. The crypt (as in older buildings) signifies the moral death of man, the cross

* See, on the subject of the Lombard style, the twenty-second and following chapters of Mr. Hope's 'Historical Essay.'

† *Vide supra*, tom. i, p. 103, *note*.

the atonement, the cupola heaven; and these three, taken in conjunction with the lengthened nave, express, reconcile, and give their due and balanced prominence to the leading ideas of the Militant and Triumphant Church, respectively embodied in the architecture of Rome and Byzantium. Add to this, the symbolism of the Baptistery, and the Christian pilgrimage, from the Font to the Door of heaven, is complete.*

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* I have confined myself in the text to the popular symbolism, the broad outline, but there was a deeper and more abstruse theory current during the early ages, and which has never perhaps been completely realised. I have nowhere seen it so fully and succinctly stated as by M. Alfred Maury in his 'Essai sur les Légendes Pieuses du Moyen-age,' p. 107:—"Les églises étaient tournées du côté de l'Orient, par allusion à la naissance du Sauveur. . . . Elles étaient placées sur des lieux élevés, comme emblème de la supériorité divine et comme l'intermédiaire entre le ciel et la terre. ('Nostræ columbæ domus simplex, etiam in editis semper et apertis et ad lucem.' *Tertull. adv. Valent.* c. 2.) Elles comprenaient quatres parties: le portique, la nef, le chœur et le sanctuaire, emblèmes de la vie pénitente, de la vie chrétienne, de la vie sainte et de la vie céleste. En effet, à la porte se trouvaient les pénitents, appelés *audientes*, écoutant, et *prostrati*, prosternés, qui étaient étendus par terre, pendant qu'on faisait la prière sur eux, et qu'on faisait sortir avant l'offrande. Puis venaient les consistants, *consistentes*, qui assistaient dans la nef au divin office, mais sans y participer, droit qui appartenait seulement aux *participantes*. L'*ambo* ou chœur était plus élevé que la nef, comme marquant un degré de vie plus parfait. C'était là que se plaçaient les clercs. L'église avait quatre portes, deux du côté de la nef, nommées *speciosæ portæ*, symbole de la vie terrestre, et deux du côté de la nef, appelées *portæ sanctæ* symbole de la vie céleste. Le sanctuaire, accessible au seul clergé, était séparé du chœur par un chancel ou balustre, qui empêchait les laïques d'y entrer, et exprimait, d'une façon mystique, la barrière qui sépare le ciel de la terre, et ne s'ouvre que pour celui qui est

Lombard Architecture may thus be likened to a lovely and graceful maiden, in whose countenance the lineaments of both her parents, the high-spirited but practical father, the lofty-souled contemplative mother, are equally recognisable, while those of the latter predominate—yet both are softened and reconciled into harmony by an expression and refinement unborrowed and her own.

It may strike you at first as a discrepancy, that at

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mort au monde, comme est celui qui se consacre au service des autels. Dans les représentations qui décoraient l'église, la gauche se rapportait à la vie présente, la droite à la vie future. La forme de croix donnée à l'édifice était l'image du Sauveur, l'abside ou chevet indiquait la place où reposait sa tête, les transsept formaient les bras, les chapelles placées à l'entour de l'abside étaient peut-être les symboles des rayons de l'auréole. Au reste, les églises furent d'abord construites sur le plan des temples de Salomon et de Zorobabel, qui présentaient déjà une disposition toute mystique, (*Cf. Euseb. Hist. Eccles.* lib. x, c. 4), et avaient dans leur distribution des rapports généraux avec l'univers. *Philonis Vit. Mosis*, lib. 3, c. 2.—*Joseph. Antiq. Jud.* lib. viii, c. 8.—*Cf. Dupuis, Orig. de tous les Cultes*, tom. i, p. 179. Les troix parties principales du temple, le parvis, le saint et le saint des saints répondaient à la terre, à la mer et au ciel. Dans les cathédrales, les roses représentaient aussi les élémens, comme à celle d'Amiens, par exemple. *Gilbert, Descr. de la Cath. d'Amiens*, p. 71. Au midi est la rose qui figure le ciel, l'air, et qui est peinte en rouge; on voit dans les compartiments des archanges et des chérubins. A l'ouest est celle de l'eau ou de la mer; les compartiments offrent des coquillages et des dauphins. Au nord est celle des vents.—C'était principalement le portail ou parvis des églises qui était décoré, ainsi qu'on peut le voir encore dans toutes les cathédrales, de répresentations tirées de l'Histoire Sainte et de statues de Saints. . . Le portail des églises offrait..l'image du paradis, *paradisus*, nom qui fut donné pour cette raison sans doute à l'aire du portail, et qui fut changé plus tard, par corruption, en celui de *parvisium*, parvis."

the moment when the Lombards were preparing to sever themselves from Greece on the question of sculptured images, they should have adopted her architecture as the foundation (for such it is) of their own, in preference to that of Rome, as exhibited in the basilica. But the reason, I think, is obvious. While Sculpture and Painting deal with material objects that demand specific representation, Architecture is the expression of abstract ideas, and must necessarily have recourse to symbolism if she would give them utterance. A cathedral is the embodied idea of the Spiritual Church, and ought to express in the first instance, and reflect back again, the sentiment from which the sculptures and paintings that adorn its walls, as well as the rites that take place within them, derive their significance. Architecture is suggestive, sculpture and painting are positive, and, like the music of nature, blending with the songs of Adam and Eve in Paradise, the three arts, thus combined, give praise to God. But the basilica is far less suggestive, far less symbolical, than the Byzantine edifice, and hence the sympathy always manifested for Byzantium by Lombard architects.*

* As symbolical and expressive of emotion, not of definite ideas, Music and Architecture are identical in principle, and distinct, the one from Painting and Sculpture, the other from Poetry, or verse,—and not only distinct, but independent of them to such a degree that, in proportion as they rise to absolute perfection, the addition of words to the one or of subsidiary design to the other, becomes not only unnecessary but obtrusive. The secret of the effect produced by the grand efforts both of Architecture and Music, in every age and country, appears to lie in their appealing to and engrossing the two most powerful and earliest-

Such was the Architecture which prevailed in Europe, co-extensively with the Latin Church, from the seventh to the close of the eleventh century; while in Italy its rule was prolonged to the thirteenth, and its influence was never entirely superseded. Like the Roman and Byzantine styles, it sprang at once to full development in all its essential points, as may be seen in its earliest monument, the venerable church of S. Michele at Padua, which existed as a sanctuary as early as 661.*

What chiefly contributed to its diffusion over Europe was the exclusive monopoly in Christian architecture, conceded by the Popes, towards the close of the eighth century, to the masons of Como, then and for ages afterwards, when the title of "Magistri Comacini" had long been absorbed in that of "Free and Accepted Masons," associated as a craft or brotherhood in art and friendship. A distinct and powerful body, composed eventually of all nations, concentring the talent of each successive generation, with all the advantages of accumulated experience and constant mutual communication—

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developed elements of human nature, Spirit and Sense—the conquest and supremacy of Spirit over Sense generating, in and through them, as in devotion and philosophy, a mystical abstraction or ecstasy far transcending, and even loathing verbal or particular expression.—But this independence is not of course reciprocal; Sculpture and Painting, twins of Intellect, rejoice and breathe freest in the pure ether of Architecture, or Spirit, like Castor or Pollux, under the breezy heaven of their father Jupiter.

* When Unulfus took sanctuary in it to escape the vengeance of King Grimoaldus. *Knight's Eccles. Antiquities*, Series I.

imbued, moreover, in that age of faith, with the deepest Christian reverence, and retaining these advantages unchallenged till their proscription in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—we cannot wonder that the Freemasons should have carried their art to a pitch of perfection which, now that their secrets are lost, it may be considered hopeless to attempt to rival.* But before treating of the great triumph of their genius, Pointed Architecture, I must point out to your notice a few of the principal monuments of their skill in the earlier Lombard style, existing in Italy and elsewhere.

These fall naturally into two classes, simpler or more rich in their style, according as they belong to the first or second *millennium* of the Christian era, and which may be appropriately described as Early and Late, or Florid, Lombard. Those that rank under the former head are few, comparatively—S. Michele is the oldest; S. Giulia of Brescia and S. Maria of Arezzo, respectively of the eighth and tenth century, are next in importance. But, after the millennium panic, Europe darted forward with new life; the Lombard nobles forsook the country for the towns, and intermarried with the Roman or Latin population—and the result was a new nation, a new rule—Italy and her republics, with all their glory. Pisa led the way. Long celebrated for her maritime achievements against the Saracens, in Sicily and on the coasts of Africa, she added, in 1063, a still

* See Hope's 'Historical Essay,' chap. 21.

brighter leaf to her chaplet by bursting the chain of the port of Palermo, capturing six vessels laden with rich merchandise, and bringing them home in triumph to her native Arno. By an unanimous decree the citizens determined to convert this booty into a cathedral—to surpass all others in size and beauty, and to be at once a thank-offering to heaven, and a perpetual monument to their country's honour. Everything was propitious—the hour was ready with its man, the architect Buschetto, from whose master-mind the plan would seem to have sprung forth at once, complete, clear, and beautiful, like wisdom from the brain of Jupiter; the first stone was laid that same year, and the building was completed before the close of the century, after becoming, long ere it was finished, the model of architecture throughout the Pisan archbishopric.* The stately and graceful Duomo of Lucca followed, then that of Siena, and those of Parma, of Modena, of Piacenza, Ferrara, Cremona, and others of lesser renown, in fair and queen-like procession. Most of these were accompanied by their Baptisteries and Campaniles, grouped for the most part most picturesquely, though nowhere with such perfect harmony and beauty as at Pisa, where Cathedral, Baptistery, Leaning Tower, and Campo Santo, with their belt of green untrodden

* See Morrona's excellent work, 'Pisa Illustrata nelle Arti del Disegno,' tom. i, pp. 60, 135, &c. edit. 8vo. He refers, for the exploit alluded to in the text, and the commencement of the Cathedral in the same year, 1063, to the 'Cronica Pisana,' printed in Muratori's great collection, tom. vi, col. 168.

grass, form a group of loveliness unrivalled in Europe —fortunate alike, as it has been prettily expressed, "in their society and their solitude." *

To this list must be added the kindred class of Conventual buildings, now becoming very numerous, especially the fairy-like cloisters of S. Zenone at Verona, those of S. Giovanni Laterano and of S. Paolo fuori le mura at Rome, and those of the monastery at Subiaco, all of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,—and a whole category of public palaces and town-halls — temples, one might call them, dedicated to Liberty and Commerce, as city after city rose to greatness and glory. Some of these, as at Padua, Piacenza, &c., are of singular beauty, and, in the North of Italy especially, are frequently built of brick, which the Lombards used with a mastery of which, in England, we have no conception; every delicate architectural ornament is fashioned in this unpromising material, and the richness of effect is marvellous. It was even frequently applied to ecclesiastical purposes; the beautiful Duomo of Cremona, with its adjacent dependencies, is entirely of brick; so are the churches of S. Francesco at Pavia and the cloisters of the celebrated Certosa, between that city and Milan. The Palazzo Pubblico at Piacenza, and the palace of the Lombard Dukes at Pavia, are of the same material, and rank among the noblest edifices in Italy.† Nor must I forget to

* *Forsyth's Italy.*

† In most of these later structures the pointed mingles with the round Lombard arch, though they belong, strictly speaking,

mention, as belonging historically, and indeed, in political geography, *de facto* to Italy, the stupendous palace, or rather fortress, of the Popes at Avignon—now, alas! degraded into a barrack*—a building by itself in every respect, and the noblest example perhaps anywhere extant of the old feudal architecture of Europe.

Singularly enough, it was at Rome that the Lombard architects, those *protégés* of the Popes, found least employment,—desolate and deserted, the scoff and scorn of Italy during the darker ages, her dwindled population lost in the vast echoing aisles of her seven basilicas, she was overstocked with churches, and had but small occasion for their services. The cloisters of S. Giovanni Laterano and S. Paolo, above mentioned, and the absis of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, and the numerous brick steeples, all of the same pattern, that mingle so picturesquely with temples of heathenry and cupolas of yesterday —pines, palm-trees, and cypresses—reddening in the "sunset's glow" as you gaze around you from the

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to the earlier style. The Certosa of Pavia, begun in the Lombard, continued in the Gothic, and ended in the Cinquecento style, is perhaps the most singular medley of this description, and yet most beautiful.—A sketch so brief as this confines me necessarily to the outline of the subject, but it would be easy to point out transitional styles, if they deserve the name, between each of the broad distinctive types of Christian architecture.

* Still remaining so, in spite of the eloquent and indignant denunciation of the Comte de Montalembert, in his Letter to Victor Hugo, 1833. *Du Vandalisme et du Catholicisme dans l'Art*, p. 13.—But France is rapidly making amends for past profanation.

ruined palace of the Cæsars — are the sole monuments that attest their skill on the spot where the bulls were dated that sped them on the wings of monopoly throughout Christendom.

North of the Alps, the Lombard Architecture is seen in most perfection at Cologne, the capital of the Carlovingian empire — the Early or Simple Lombard, that is to say, as distinguished from the Late or Florid style, which being developed nearly at the same moment with the Early Gothic, was almost entirely confined to Italy. From Cologne as a centre, this Early Lombard spread along the Rhine, and over the North of Europe, gradually undergoing serious modifications or curtailments; it appears in France at the beginning of the eleventh century—in England not till the days of Edward the Confessor and William the Conqueror, when it became what we usually term the Norman style; in Germany, the belfry was first attached to the side of the church, then to its façade, and finally was elevated, in place of the Byzantine cupola, on the intersection of the cross, thus preparing the way for the Gothic spire—a substitution in which I cannot but recognise that disrelish for contemplation which wrote itself in stone the moment the Teutons had acquired sufficient mechanical skill to create a new style for themselves. Let us take breath—that moment had arrived at the commencement of the twelfth century.

SECTION 2.—*Gothic Architecture North of the Alps.*

A NEW style of Architecture, eminently original, yet duly developed from the Lombard, which immediately preceded it, then appeared, suddenly and simultaneously as a flash of lightning, in almost every country of Europe on this side the Alps—the birth, not, like its predecessor, of one individual people, but of the Teutonic mind in general, as represented in those parliaments of genius, the Lodges of the North—an architecture peculiarly ecclesiastical, more so even than the Lombard, although equally susceptible of adaptation to any civil purpose. Its characteristics, as displayed in the Gothic Cathedral, may be soon sketched, in outline at least—you will find full details in the works of Mr. Hope and Dr. Whewell, writers whom it would be impertinent to praise.

Except in one important point, the general distribution of the church underwent little change. The crypt and the Latin Cross were retained, but the cupola was suppressed, and its place supplied by a lofty tower, surmounted by a spire. For the absis, or tribune, a deep recess or chancel was substituted, a sort of Holy of Holies, secluding the priest from the people during the performance of the sacrifice of the mass; and a lofty stone screen, symbolical of the transition through death from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant, and so far akin to the triumphal arch of the basilica, was interposed be-

tween the chancel and the nave.* On the outside, the three doors of the western façade were fronted by deep porches, lined with imagery and sculpture; occasionally the Catharine-wheel window, or rose, appeared above the central portal, but a large mullioned window more frequently replaced it. Two lofty towers, containing the bells, flanked the façade, and together with the third, over the centre of the pile, were understood to signify the Trinity. Separate Baptisteries were abolished, and a small font was placed within one of the doorways.

I cannot suppress my regret at most of these changes, though I acknowledge that they were inevitable, and that they were amply atoned for by the grand distinguishing feature of the new style—the most prominent, if not the cause of all its peculiarities and beauties—the substitution, namely, of the vertical for the horizontal principle which still lingered in the Lombard architecture, and the consequent universal and exclusive adoption of the pointed instead of the round-headed arch of the ancient Romans.† Hence the unlimited power of vaulting, hence the increased height of the roof, hence the lightness and reed-like elasticity of the pier, shooting up into the arch, and so uninterruptedly to the roof, like the flight of an arrow, gradually losing its first impulse, but soaring still when lost to the eye,—hence the enlargement of the space for

* This was almost always surmounted by a rood, or crucifix, attended, to the right and left, by the Virgin and S. John.

† It may be said to mark the moment when the Teutonic, or Medo-Persian, took the lead over the Classic or Sanscrit element, in the Intellect of Europe.

light, and the idea of tempering its glare by painted glass,—hence the unnumbered beauties, internal and external, of groining, pendant, mullion-window, flying buttress, pinnacle and spire—hence, in short, the life and animation, the vigour and freshness, the exulting consciousness of power, the nature-like luxuriance of tracery and ornament, that pervade the whole pile, and rouse the heart like the roar of a cataract swelling on the breeze amid the shades and sunshine of a forest.—And yet all this is the mere surface-shadow of a deeper meaning,—it was in Gothic Architecture that Christian Symbolism reached its consummation, or rather took up and re-expressed the faith and expectations of the Church in a different and more spiritualized point of view. That which in Lombard Architecture is confined to the general outline, extends in Gothic to the minutest details; like each several fact in the Bible or in the Book of Nature, every window, every corbel, every cusp has its mystery; it would require a volume to point out each minute particular, and in a thousand instances individual fancy must interpret what individual fancy first enigmatised. But the upward spring, the vertical tendency, is the key to the whole,—whether, as in the pyramids and obelisks of Egypt, it imply the natural yearning of the human heart to the "blest abodes" of an uncovenanted futurity—or faith, better assured, in the resurrection of the Redeemer and of the Church in his person—or the joyful anticipation of that continual up-springing approximation towards the Fount of Wisdom, the Divine Vision, which we are warranted to look forward to as the bliss of Eternity.

Comparing, in fact, apart from enthusiasm, the two styles of Lombard and Pointed Architecture, they will strike you, I think, as the expression, respectively, of that alternate repose and activity which characterise the Christian life, exhibited in perfect harmony in Christ alone, who, on earth, spent his night in prayer to God, his day in doing good to man—in heaven, as we know by his own testimony, "worketh hitherto," conjointly with the Father—for ever, at the same time, reposing on the infinity of his wisdom and of his power. Each, then, of these styles has its peculiar significance, each is perfect in its way. The Lombard Architecture, with its horizontal lines, its circular arches and expanding cupola, soothes and calms one; the Gothic, with its pointed arches, aspiring vaults and intricate tracery, rouses and excites—and why? Because the one symbolises an infinity of Rest, the other of Action, in the adoration and service of God. And this consideration will enable us to advance a step farther:—The aim of the one style is definite, of the other indefinite; we look up to the dome of heaven and calmly acquiesce in the abstract idea of infinity; but we only realise the impossibility of conceiving it by the flight of imagination from star to star, from firmament to firmament. Even so Lombard Architecture attained perfection, expressed its idea, accomplished its purpose—but Gothic never; the Ideal is unapproachable.*

* Perhaps men, were their sentiments analysed, would be found to prefer the Classic-Greek or the Gothic Architecture, according as their characteristics are purely Intellectual, or Con-

I have said nothing of the theory which accounts for the change of style by the necessity in a Northern

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templatively and Actively Spiritual,—and the mind capable of fully comprehending the Gothic would, as a necessary consequence, (if unprejudiced,) appreciate the Greek more justly than the devotee of the Greek would appreciate the Gothic—inasmuch as Spirit, in the fullest development of Human Nature, includes Intellect.—I subjoin, in illustration of the symbolism and the peculiar emotions born of Gothic Architecture, the "Lost Church" of the poet Uhland—founded, I apprehend, on an ancient tradition of the Sinaite peninsula :—

"THE LOST CHURCH.

"Oft in the forest far one hears
A passing sound of distant bells,
Nor legends old nor human wit
Can tell us whence the music swells.
From the Lost Church, 'tis thought, that soft
Faint ringing cometh on the wind ;
Once many pilgrims trod the path,
But no one now the way can find.

Not long since, deep into the wood
I stray'd, where path was none to see ;
Weary of human wickedness,
My heart to God yearn'd longingly.
There, through the silent wilderness,
Again I heard the sweet bells stealing,
Ever, as higher yearn'd my heart,
The nearer and the louder pealing.

My spirit was so self-indrawn,
My sense with sweetness rapt so high,
That how those sounds within me wrought
Remaineth yet a mystery.
It seem'd as if a hundred years
Had laps'd while thus I had been dreaming—
When, lo ! above the clouds a space
Free opened out, in sunshine gleaming.

The heaven was so darkly blue,
The sun so full and glowing bright—
And rose a minster's stately pile,
Expanding in the golden light.
Seemed the clouds resplendently,
Like wings, to bear it up alway,
And in the blessed depths of heaven
Its spired tower to melt away.

climate of avoiding the dome and all flat surfaces,

The bells' delicious harmony
Down from the tower in quiverings flow'd,
Yet drew not hand of man the strings,—
They moved but to the Breath of God.
As if upon my throbbing heart
That self-same Breath its influence shed,
So entered I that minster high
With timorous joy and faltering tread.

Words cannot paint what there-within
Awoke my spirit's ecstasies;
The darkly-brilliant windows glow'd
With martyrs' pious effigies;
Into a new and living world,
Rich imag'd forth, I gaz'd abroad,
A world of holy women and
Of warriors of the host of God.

Down at the altar low I knelt,
Thrilling with awe and holy love—
Heaven and its glorious mysteries
Were pictur'd on the vault above.
But when again I looked up,
Roof, arch and pictur'd vault were gone—
Full opened was the door of heaven,
And every veil had been withdrawn.[a]

What then, in silent prayerful awe,
Of majesty I saw reveal'd,—
What heard of sound more blissful far
Than aught to human ear unseal'd,
Lies not within the might of words;
Yet whoso longeth for such good,
Let him take heed unto the bells
That ring in whispers through the wood."

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[a] Unintentionally, doubtless, Uhland has here used the word (veil) by which the Sooffees of the East express whatever intervenes oppos-ingly between the human soul and union with the Deity.—A similar feeling is expressed in the beautiful lines,

"Whatever passes as a cloud between
The mental eye of faith and things unseen,
Causing that brighter world to disappear,
Or seem less lovely or its hopes less dear,
This is our world, our idol, though it bear
Affection's impress or devotion's air."

where snow could lodge.* Nothing is more likely than that this matter-of-fact expediency suggested the change in the first instance, although if such was the case, it must be owned that Beauty lost no time in girding Utility with her cestus. But gazing rather more earnestly into the millstone, may we not recognise in the passage from Lombard to Gothic Architecture, that transition from the Repose to the Activity of the Imagination, coupled too with the first stirrings of Reason, which so remarkably characterised the mind of Europe towards the close of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth century, when the Crusaders, on the one hand, were crowding to Palestine, and the Schoolmen, on the other, were commencing their flight into the seventh heaven of theory and invention—those schoolmen, let me observe, being almost to a man Teutons, or of Teutonic blood, (S. Thomas Aquinas himself not excepted,) and the prevalence of the Scholastic philosophy in Italy having been almost exactly correspondent, in duration and extent, with that of its sister, the Pointed Architecture in that country—both of them exotics, never thoroughly acclimated? In their death, at least, they were not divided, each of them, as we shall find, having been superseded there nearly at the same moment, in the fifteenth century, when the new anti-papal Reasoning spirit, allying itself with Paganism in its detestation of the corruptions of Imaginative Christianity, found its voice in the philosophy of Macchiavelli, and in the Modern-antique, or Cinque-

* Hope's 'Historical Essay,' chap. 35.

cento, Architecture—from both of which, in theology, morals, politics, literature and art, we are still suffering, even in our "ultima Thule" of Britain. —But I must rein in this devil of speculation.

Pointed, or to resume the old conventional and prescriptive epithet, Gothic Architecture,* can only be profitably studied North of the Alps; there only has it been duly developed, sympathetically and legitimately, from its fundamental principle. This development has been two-fold—*Generic*, reflecting the progress of the collective mind of Christian Teutonic Europe—*Special*, reflecting that of each individual nation, as modified in successive ages by its peculiar temperament and institutions. Hence, in Ecclesiastical architecture, the various styles successively prevalent in Germany, Flanders, France, England—those for instance, named Early English, Decorated, Perpendicular and Tudor, in our own island,† each

* See Dr. Whewell's defence of the epithet in his 'Architectural Notes on German Churches,' p. 50.—'Teutonic,' perhaps, in the restrictive sense of the term, would be at once the most comprehensive and exclusive designation; the Italians have always so distinguished it,—as the 'Maniera Tedesca,' or 'Gotico-Tedesca.' But 'Gothic architecture' has become the classic, the prescriptive term, universally understood and accepted by the many, and I should be loath to change it.

† First discriminated and named by Mr. Rickman. And see Dr. Whewell's observations, '*Archit. Notes*,' p. 50.—I cannot, however, refrain from referring to a nomenclature advocated by Mr. A. J. B. Hope, ('Ecclesiologist,' tom. i, p. 192,) which certainly links Architecture with History much more agreeably. He proposes to name the successive styles of English architecture—Saxon, Early Norman, Late Norman, Early Plantagenet (Early English), Middle Plantagenet (Decorated), Late

of them distinct, and yet akin to corresponding, though not always contemporary varieties in other countries,—hence in Civil, but more especially in Domestic architecture, the peculiar character observable in every old town in Flanders and Germany—in Ghent, Bruges, Antwerp, Cologne—Lübeck to the North, Innspruck to the South—and to name but one more, the most picturesque perhaps of all Teutonic cities, Nuremberg—each, like a faithful mirror, reflecting the aristocratic or democratic tendencies of the spot, yet all expressive of that leading idea, that watchword of the Teutonic race, Individuality and Home,—whilst amid all this apparent confusion, this crossing and intermingling of the lines of life on the hand of art, the great channels of feeling and thought remain unclogged and prominent, the special ranges within the generic, the partial within the universal—the veins report themselves to the arteries, and the arteries to the heart, and that heart is still, as in the old Lombard day, Cologne—where the soul of Charlemagne himself seems to have inspired the architect who conceived the stupendous idea of the Cathedral—still and ever, fragment though it be, the giant's step towards heaven in Gothic Architecture.

But Architecture, as I said above, is symbolical, Sculpture and Painting are positive—dependent, that

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Plantagenet (Perpendicular), Tudor, and Stuart, including under the latter designation, the revival of Gothic Architecture under James I. and Charles I. The merit of scientific classification of course remains with Mr. Rickman.

is to say, on Form, on the possession and correct appreciation of the relics of the elder world, the marbles of Greece and Rome. These were to be found only in Italy. It was in Italy, therefore—yet not till Gothic Architecture had been introduced there from Germany—that Sculpture and Painting revived in earnest; it was from Italy, consequently, that the great impulse was given to Sculpture North of the Alps, and through Sculpture, to Painting,—Italy, therefore, takes the precedence from henceforth in the history of art, and I shall accordingly devote the remainder of the present letter, and those immediately succeeding it, to the consideration of Gothic Architecture as naturalised in Italy, and extending her wing of fosterage and protection over her new-born sisters, deferring that of the corresponding development of Sculpture and Painting in Germany, to the close of this First and peculiarly Spiritual Period of European Art.*

* On the question of pure Gothic Architecture let me refer to Mr. Hope's 'Historical Essay,' chap. 32, &c., and Dr. Whewell's 'Architectural Notes,' and also his 'History of the Inductive Sciences,' tom. i, pp. 343, sqq. The works also of Messrs. Rickman, Markland, Bloxam, Britton and Pugin on Gothic Architecture are well known and of great merit, the latter gentleman, especially, entering much more fully into its symbolism and principles as connected with religion. The 'Glossary of Architecture,' of which a new edition has just appeared, is also a mine of information. This latter work, however, and numberless others recently published, tacitly pass over the early Roman, Byzantine and Lombard styles, and assume that Gothic and Christian Architecture are synonymous, and that the ancient Gothic churches of England are precisely in harmony with her existing formularies and faith. I much fear that Mr. Pugin is right—that it is "as utterly impossible to

SECTION 3.—*Gothic Architecture South of the Alps.*

IT was not till the thirteenth century, long after acquiring the supremacy in Germany, France, and England, that the new style crossed the Alps. Its first appearance is in the conventual church of S. Francis, at Assisi, finished by a German architect in 1230,—beautiful in itself, and still more interest-

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square a Catholic building with the present rites as to mingle oil with water,"—that "those who think merely to build chancels without reviving the ancient faith, will be miserably deceived in their expectation,"—that "the study of ancient church architecture" (in such an exclusive spirit) "is an admirable preparation for the old faith,"—and that "if the present revival of Catholic antiquity is suffered to proceed much farther, it will be seen that either the Common Prayer or the ancient models must be abandoned." *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, pp. 130, 137, &c.—But what is the alternative? the Meeting-house? By no means. The Church of England is neither Catholic nor Protestant—she does not with the Catholics exalt Imagination and repudiate Reason, nor with the Protestants exalt Reason and repudiate Imagination, but includes them both, harmoniously opposed, within her constitution, so as to preserve the balance of truth, and point out the true 'Via Media' between Superstition on the one hand and Scepticism on the other, thus approximating (in degree) to the Ideal of human nature, Christ Incarnate, of whom the Church is the Body and ought to be the Likeness and the Image. This then is the problem—England wants a new Architecture, expressive of the epoch, of her Anglican faith and of the human mind as balanced in her development, as heir of the past and trustee for the future—a modification, it may be, of the Gothic, but not otherwise so than as the Gothic was a modification of the Lombard, the Lombard of the Byzantine and Roman, the Byzantine and Roman of the Classic Greek, the Classic Greek of the Egyptian. We have a right to expect this from the importance of the epoch, and I see no reason why the Man to create it, the Buschetto of the nineteenth century, may not be among us at this moment, although we know it not.

ing as the cradle of Italian painting. It consists, properly speaking, of two churches, one above the other,—the Upper broad and spacious, preserving the usual form of the Latin cross, but free from side-chapels and from every incumbrance, and lighted by broad and lofty windows, cheerful and almost gay in its general appearance—the Lower, gloomy as the grave, which it is designed to imitate; the nave is lined by chapels, dark and obscure like sepulchral recesses, the windows are small, the arches round and low, bending heavily over the shrine of S. Francis, situated in the centre of the transept, and below which again you may descend deeper still, to a subterraneous crypt, or excavation, in which his relics actually repose. Nowhere is the distinctive symbolism of the Lombard and Gothic Architecture more strikingly contrasted, and the whole scheme of decoration seems to have been planned in reference to it. —I shall have repeated opportunities of recurring to this, when speaking of the early painters of Pisa and Florence. I may add that the style of the Upper church has extended to the city which has grown up around the monastery; pointed arches are to be seen everywhere, and the place has more of the look of the middle ages than (perhaps) any other in Italy.

But setting aside this church at Assisi, and a few similar structures, (of which I may specify the Duomo at Milan, the Ducal Palace at Venice, and S. Giovanni a Carbonara at Naples, all built by German architects in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,) few buildings of any importance in Italy

present the pure unmingled Gothic of the North.* Classical influences, far less propitious to the symbolical than the positive in Art, still lingered there, and necessarily modified it. A new school of architects arose during the latter half of the thirteenth century, and filled Italy with churches and cloisters, public palaces and halls, in a style of much beauty, but superficial and essentially Southern in its character. Niccola Pisano was the founder of this school—the parent of Sculpture and Painting through his judicious use of antiquity, a man of whom in that respect it would be impossible to speak too highly, but whose fame would have stood higher had he adhered strictly to his Transalpine models in Architecture. The church of S. Antony at Padua, part of the Duomo at Pistoja, and the campaniles of that church and of S. Niccolò at Pisa (the latter a most ingenious structure) are works of Niccola,—his son, Giovanni, built the Campo Santo, or cemetery of Pisa, for the reception of the sacred earth brought from Jerusalem by the Archbishop Ubaldo after the expulsion of the Christians by Saladin, the most beautiful cloister perhaps in the world, and, next to the church of Assisi, the principal sanctuary of early Italian

* Not indeed that these are pure Northern Gothic, except in comparison with those of Italian erection. For Dr. Whewell's criticisms on Milan Cathedral, see his 'Architectural Notes,' p. 34,—still it is a glorious pile. The palace of the Doges exhibits a most curious tinge of the Arabesque or Saracenic. The Gothic influence was strongest at Naples, even during the middle ages, through the Normans and the dynasty of Anjou, closely connected with the North.

painting.—In 1279, the year after the Campo Santo was begun, Fra Ristoro, Fra Listo, and some other Dominican monks, pupils evidently of the same school, laid the first stone of their monastery at Florence, S. Maria Novella; and about five years afterwards, the sculptor Arnolfo, pupil of Niccola, settled there, relinquished sculpture for architecture, and spent the rest of his life in the service of the republic, then in the spring-tide of her greatness, rearing those vast and splendid piles which stamp the fair city with a character so peculiarly her own.* His first work was the Ultimo Cerchio, or outer circle, of the walls; in 1284, he commenced that singular building, originally a granary, now a church surmounted by a record-office, the Orsanmichele,—the following year, the Loggia de' Priori, now no more; the date of the Palace of the Podestà, now called the Bargello, and used as a public prison—an awful pile, gloomy without and most characteristic within—is less certain, but it was probably built during the years that immediately succeeded. In 1294, he began the Franciscan church of S. Croce, and incrusted the Baptistery with black and white marbles, after a fashion possibly of Saracenic origin, and of which the first example had been set by Buschetto in the Duomo at Pisa. In 1295, he built a fortress in the Val d'Arno, which gave such satisfaction that he was admitted to the citizenship, and shortly afterwards he seems to have begun the Palazzo Vecchio, the most striking building at Florence, and which certainly gains in

* *Vasari, Life of Arnolfo.*

character from the popular prejudice which would not permit him to extend its foundations over the site of the demolished palaces of the Ghibelline Uberti—a space still preserved free and unencroached upon, under the name of the Piazza del Gran Duca. Finally, in 1298, according to Vasari, but probably five or six years earlier, he commenced the Duomo, under the responsibility of making it the loftiest, most sumptuous and most magnificent pile that human wit could conceive or labour execute—"the wisest of this city," says the decree, "being of common counsel and consent, that the republic should undertake nothing unless with the determination to carry it forth from idea into performance commensurate with the grandeur of a soul composed of the minds of the whole community united and resolved into one single will and purpose,"—the most ample and fearless commission, surely, ever awarded to man or architect.* The building was begun at once, and

* The words are as follows, in the 'Libro alle Riformagioni,' for the year 1294. "Atteso che la somma prudenza d'un populo d' origine grande sia di procedere nelli affari suoi di modo, che dalle operazioni esteriori si riconosca non meno il savio, che magnanimo suo operare, si ordina ad Arnolfo capo maestro del nostro comune, che faccia un modello osia di segno della rinovazione di Santa Reparata, con quella più alta e somma magnificenza, che inventar non si possa nè maggiore nè più bella dall' industria e potere degli uomini, secondo che da più savj di questa città è stato detto e consigliato in pubblica e privata adunanza, non doversi intraprendere cose del comune, se il concetto non è di farle corrispondenti ad un cuore, che vien fatto grandissimo, perchè composto dell' animo di più cittadini uniti insieme in un sol volere, molto più doversi ciò, considerata la qualità di quella catedra." From Dr. Ernst Förster's 'Beiträge zur neuern Kunstgeschichte,' *Leipz.* 8vo., 1835, p. 152.

prosecuted with such vigour, that the three tribunes were already vaulted over at the death of the architect in 1300. Andrea Pisano, Giotto—who reared the beautiful Campanile—and Orcagna successively held the office of *Capo-Maestro*, or chief architect, during the following century, but after the death of the latter it was left unfinished for many years, till the celebrated Brunellesco completed the pile by rearing the cupola, a hundred and fifty years after the death of the first projector, Arnolfo.—But the name of Brunellesco announces a new era in architecture, that of the Cinquecento or revived antique:—many intimations of the approaching revolution—of a tendency, that is to say, to relapse into the Lombard, as transitional to the Classic—had appeared during the fourteenth century,—the arches of the Campo Santo at Pisa are an instance of this; they are not pointed but round, the delicate tracery being of later insertion; so were those of the Orsanmichele, previous to the intercolumniations being built up,—and such are the three reared with such surpassing grandeur and elegance by Orcagna, in the Piazza del Gran Duca (then del Popolo), as a Loggia for the priors and standard-bearer of the republic,* and which similarly have exchanged their original name of Loggia de' Priori, for that of Loggia de' Lanzi,

* It is described as the 'Loggia Dominorum Priorum et Vexilliferi,' and 'Loggia Dominorum Priorum,' in contemporary documents, cited by Baldinucci, 'Notizie de' Professori del Disegno, da Cimabue in qua,' tom. ii, p. 142, edit. Manni, Flor. 1767.

commemorative of the Swiss *lanz-knechts*, or guards of the Medici; they form the most beautiful portico in Italy, and Michael Angelo, on being consulted by Cosmo I. on the decorations of Florence, recommended him to extend them all round the piazza. But for the Gothic cornice, this lovely Loggia might have been cited as one of the earliest specimens of the Cinquecento.*

Another branch of the Pisan school had in the meanwhile settled at Siena, nowise behindhand in architectural enterprise during these stirring times. Like Pisa, her predecessor and ally in power, she had commenced her cathedral in the eleventh century, but it had been much longer in hand, and when completed, the façade proved unsatisfactory; it was destroyed, and a new design was obtained from Giovanni Pisano in 1284; Lorenzo Maitani, a Sienese, but evidently of the Pisan school, completed it in 1290, and laid the foundations, that same year, of the equally celebrated Duomo at Orvieto, where

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* This loggia was begun between 1374, in which year the houses on which it stood had not been bought, and 1377, when it was in progress, as appears by documents cited by Niccolini, (the poet,) in his 'Elogio d' Andrea Orgagna,' Florence, 1816, p. xl.—The poet's estimate of its beauty is not exaggerated; "Alla vista," he says, "di questo portico, il più bello del mondo, rimane il core commosso, l' occhio occupato e soddisfatto, l' unità non vi produce la noia; e quantunque nei pilastri decorati d' un ordine Corintio di barbara maniera, poco il nostro artefice si discosti dallo stile de' suoi contemporanei, pure le modinature, gli aggetti, gl' intagli son così bene adattati alla massa generale, che ne risulta quell' armonica quiete per cui l' anima soddisfatta s' appaga." p. xxiv.

he settled definitively, in 1310, at the requisition of the inhabitants, whom he had provoked by his repeated and prolonged absences.* His place at Siena was worthily supplied by the brothers Agostino and Agnolo, pupils of Giovanni Pisano, and then rapidly rising in reputation. They had been entrusted, in 1308, with the elevation of that noble pile the Palazzo Pubblico, and were afterwards appointed public architects, in which capacity they served their country for many years, generally working together, though sometimes apart. They were distinguished as sculptors also, but it is as architects that they are thought of at Siena, where every street and almost every house in the older parts of the town recalls their memory—their peculiar and highly picturesque style having been followed by a crowd of nameless, or at least fameless, imitators, till drowned in the universal deluge of the Cinquecento.†

These Tuscan-Gothic buildings are fine, unquestionably, more especially those (and I wish to lay an emphasis on the distinction) which are Civil, not Ecclesiastical. As public palaces, nothing can be nobler, they bear the stamp of true grandeur; but as churches, as Gothic churches at least, I can praise them only with a qualification; they are far inferior

* 'Storia del Duomo di Orvieto,' by the Abate Dellavalle, *Rome*, 4to., 1794, pp. 98, 248.

† See Dellavalle's 'Lettere Sanesi,' *Rome*, 3 tom. 4to., 1786, tom. ii, pp. 168 sqq.—and *passim*.—For the character of this work see a note to Section Third of the following letter.

to their Northern prototypes—the leading idea of the Pointed Architecture is not only never carried out, but seems never even to have been comprehended; S. Croce, S. Maria Novella, are essentially Lombard edifices, the pointed arch occurring as if by chance, the vertical principle snubbed (as it were) whenever it attempts to assert its natural tendency. And were anything wanting to prove how completely the spirit of the active, arrowy Gothic has been misapprehended, it would be enough to remark that in their most admired structures, in their earliest and latest efforts, in S. Antonio of Padua and in the Duomos of Florence, Siena, and Orvieto, Niccola Pisano and his followers wed fire with water, in uniting the pointed arch to the cupola. The consequence is inevitable under such circumstances—the more august member gives the tone of feeling, and subordinates that of less importance, and the pointed arch accordingly either escapes notice altogether, or, if too obtrusive, annoys one by suggesting the semblance of a fop perpetually interrupting the meditations of a philosopher.* The very perpetuation, more especially at Florence, of the alternate horizontal courses of black and white marble, the cherished legacy of the

* I know not whether an appeal to the Campanile of Giotto would not be more effectual than argument on this subject. According to the original plan, it was to be surmounted by a spire, a hundred and fifty feet high; let the reader stand before it, and ask himself whether, with Michael Scott at his elbow or Aladdin's lamp in his hand, he would supply the deficiency? I think not. Its spirit is thoroughly Lombard.

Pisan Buschetto, neutralises the vertical principle of Gothic architecture.*

The fact was, as I have already indeed shown, that the Italians, ever, as a nation, contemplative rather than dramatic, always sighed for the Roman arch and the Eastern dome, and when, during the early years of the fifteenth century, Brunellesco appeared in the field, with the rules of the old Roman art, and the genius which knew how to apply them, they eschewed the pointed arch and the vertical principle at once and for ever. Independently of the gradual dying away of the Christian and chivalric spirit throughout Europe—so visible in the gradually

* My unfavourable opinion of 'Italian-Gothic' is chiefly based on what I conceive to be its confusion of ideas, its metaphysical untruth. In a scientific point of view, I doubt not its meriting the praise bestowed upon it by Professor Willis in his 'Remarks on the Architecture of the Middle Ages, especially of Italy,' (*Cambr.*, 8vo., 1835,) a standard book.—Yet Mr. Knight's distaste is expressed still more strongly than my own, and apparently both on the ground of symbolism and science. "In Italy," says that gentleman, "if the vertical principle was adopted, the horizontal principle was not discarded, and the latter was a constant check on the tendencies of the former. The Italian architects, obeying their employers, but obeying with reluctance, never acquainted themselves with the rules, the proportions and the arrangements, through which the Northern architects produced successful results. They worked at random, and consequently made mistakes. They consented to imitate, but they sought no more, and neither caught the spirit of the original, nor struck out new paths of their own. . . . Upon the whole the pointed style in Italy has always the appearance of an exotic plant, permitted to live, and pleasing to a certain degree, but deficient in vigour, and never obtaining the height or the development at which it arrives on the Northern side of the Alps."—*Architectural Antiquities, &c.*, Introd. p. ix.

lower and lower depression of the pointed arch—and independently too of the successive proscriptions of the Freemasons, to which I attach little importance, as they had outlived their usefulness—I cannot but think that an innate physical and intellectual distaste dictated the abandonment of Gothic Architecture in Italy.

I have written this letter with much diffidence, and with the full consciousness that the study of a life would scarcely justify me in speaking on the subject. But the little I have said is essential to my purpose of tracing Christian art in the origin and connection of its distinct departments—for it is a fact, that I hope to establish in the course of these Sketches, that Sculpture and Painting, both in the South and in the North, revived in strict alliance with Gothic Architecture—and that Painting, in particular, reached perfection in Italy long indeed after the extinction of that style South of the Alps, but still in the succession of a line of artists, few but faithful, whose sympathies induced them to stand apart from the throng that followed in the triumph of the comparatively anti-Christian Cinquecento. I have sketched, in a word, a bold architectural background; I shall now proceed to introduce group after group till the picture of this opening period of Christian Art be complete.

CHRISTIAN ART OF MODERN EUROPE.

PERIOD I.

ARCHITECTURE.

Development of the Christian Element, Spirit—Lombard and Gothic, or Pointed Architecture—Rise of Sculpture and Painting—Expression.

II. SCULPTURE OF THE LOMBARDS, AND ITALICO-BYZANTINE REVIVALS IN SCULPTURE, MOSAIC AND PAINTING, ANTERIOR TO THE ASCENDANCY OF NICCOLA PISANO.

SECT. 1. *Sculpture.*
SECT. 2. *Mosaics.*
SECT. 3. *Painting.*

LETTER II.

SCULPTURE OF THE LOMBARDS,

AND

ITALICO-BYZANTINE REVIVALS,

IN SCULPTURE, MOSAIC AND PAINTING, ANTERIOR TO THE ASCENDANCY OF NICCOLA PISANO.

From the conclusion of the preceding letter you will naturally expect an introduction in the present to Niccola Pisano, the parent of modern Sculpture and Painting, as developed in alliance with Gothic Architecture. But a transition period must first be noticed, during which the artists of Italy endeavoured to express the new life which stirred in their veins through the types and traditions, and in the style and spirit of the Menologion and the Dalmatica, and in association, for the most part, with that elder Lombard Architecture, which maintained such close affinity and deep sympathy with that of Byzantium. These efforts were, with few exceptions, insulated, and however laudable in themselves, would merit little notice had the mind which conceived, expired in giving them birth. But such was not the case, and the period in question may be not unaptly

compared to that which usually intervenes in the life of a poet, between the hour when he first becomes aware of his vocation, and that in which he walks abroad in the conscious might of originality —a period of Imitation, during which he endeavours to invest the bright images and daring thoughts that visit his solitude with the measure, cadence and peculiar phraseology of his most admired predecessors in song,—like a young eaglet gazing on the sun long ere its unfledged pinion enables it to rise from the ground. The productions of that immature period are in later life looked back upon with a smile, yet to the critic and biographer they have their value as documents witnessing to the intellectual growth of their author.—It is under shelter of this analogy that I propose to devote the few following pages to a brief review of the Sculpture, Mosaics and Painting of Italy, immediately antecedent to the new and peculiarly original style introduced at Pisa, Siena and Florence during the latter half of the thirteenth century.

SECTION 1.—*Sculpture.*

THE Sculpture of this period falls naturally into two subdivisions, strictly correspondent with the two periods, the earlier and the later, of Lombard Architecture. The earlier is the more original. It may be seen in full development on the façade of S. Michele at Pavia—rude indeed to a degree, but full of fire and a living record of the daring race that created it. The archangel trampling down the

dragon appears over the central door, S. George similarly victorious, and Jonah vomited by the whale, over those to the right and left; while in the jambs of the arches and in belts running along the walls, kindred subjects are sculptured in every direction and without the least apparent connection—dragons, griffins, eagles, snakes, sphinxes, centaurs—the whole mythological menagerie which our ancestors brought with them from their native Iran,—and these either fighting with each other or with Lombard warriors, or amicably interlaced with human figures, male and female, or grinning and ready to fly at you from the grey walls—interspersed with warriors breaking in horses or following the hounds, minstrels, and even tumblers, or at least, figures standing on their heads; in short, the strong impress everywhere meets you of a wild and bold equestrian nation, glorying in war, delighting in horses and the chace, falconry, music and gymnastics—ever in motion, never sitting still—credulous, too, of old wives' stories, and tenacious of whatever of marvellous and strange had arrested their fancy during their long pilgrimage from the East,—for zodiacs from Chaldæa, and emblems of the stirring mythology of Scandinavia, constantly alternate, in these and similar productions, with the delineation of those pastimes or pursuits which their peculiar habits induced them to reiterate with such zest and frequency. But they are rude, most rude; do not mistake me,—I plead only that they are life-like, and speak with a tongue which those who love the Runic rhyme and the tra-

ditions of the North, and feel kindred blood warm in their veins, will understand and give ear to.*

Sculptures of similar character, though none, I

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* Mr. Knight notices "the very remarkable resemblance existing between the portals of the Italian" (Lombard) "churches and the portals of the oldest churches of Norway. The monsters and the singular mode in which they are combined and interlaced, bear so great a similarity to each other in both places, that the coincidence can hardly be regarded as merely accidental." I shall have occasion hereafter to point out similar resemblances between the Italian-Lombard and the Norman churches in England.—For the sports of the Lombards see Gibbon, chap. 45. The 'Chase' of merry England has its origin in the same remote antiquity, both countries apparently perpetuating in this respect the ancient manners of Iran, as described in the Cyropædia. The beneficial influence of the Chase on our national character has scarcely as yet been adequately appreciated, but it was great, and this we owe to the Norman mixture, for as Somerville says (himself a Norman) in his charming poem, its mysteries as a science were hardly understood

> "till, from Neustria's coasts,
> Victorious William to more decent rules
> Subdued our Saxon fathers, taught to speak
> The proper dialect, with horn and voice
> To cheer the busy hound."

—Boxing, on the other hand, the influence of which, in its rules of fair play, has been scarcely less beneficial than that of the Chase, would seem to be purely Saxon. Prize-fighting is to the one what *battues* are to the other—corruption and degradation—slaughterous, unmanly, and unworthy of that noble compound of Saxon and Norman, the Englishman.—Of the mystic animals introduced in these sculptures, the griffin is peculiarly Oriental, and may be seen to this day among the ruins of Persepolis. The eagle too is not of Roman but Scandinavian and Iranian ancestry, originally, it would appear, emblematic of the omnivision of the Deity. As a commentary on this love of the monstrous and the marvellous, I may refer to the 'Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus' of Olaus Magnus, especially the edition with woodcuts, printed at Rome in 1555.

think, so fiery and original, may be seen in other of the early Lombard churches, and in them too the character and habitual associations of the Lombards may be distinctly read. To the left of the doorway of S. Zenone at Verona, for instance, you may see two warriors charging with lances, and a figure running another through with his sword, (appropriate decorations truly for the temple of the God of peace!)—and to the right, King Theodoric, (the Dietrich I fancy of the Hildebrand-lay and the Helden-buch,) on horseback, chasing the stag with his hounds, and bound, according to the inscription, to Hell,—a version probably, and a very early one, of that truly Teutonic legend, the wild Huntsman.*—We approximate to chivalry at the Duomo, where the door is guarded by rude statues of Roland and Oliver, paladins of Charlemagne,—the sword of the former inscribed with its redoubted name, Durindarda.†

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* From another inscription the sculptures of this portal appear to be by artists named Nicholas and William. See the description of S. Zenone in Murray's admirable Hand-book for Northern Italy.

† Dramatic representations, however, of sacred subjects are by no means excluded from the Sculpture of the Lombards, but they generally want that impress of national character which would redeem their rudeness. The most interesting display of these is to be seen at Milan in the *palliotto*, or shrine of S. Ambrose, executed by Wolfinus (Wolfing, probably, in the original German), who describes himself as a "magister faber," or master smith, a little before the middle of the ninth century. Having been prevented from seeing it when last at Milan, I must refer to *Cicognara, Storia della Scultura*, tom. i, p. 163, and *Agincourt, Sculpture*, pl. 26, and corresponding text.

Another peculiarity of this first epoch of Lombard sculpture is the grotesque imagery introduced into the capitals of the columns, or piers, within the church, and exhibiting the same monsters, aerial, aquatic and terrestrial, that decorate the exterior walls; this, however, was gradually disused, and in the later Lombard architecture the capitals are usually rude imitations of the Corinthian.

In commencing the second millennium, we find an improvement in Sculpture, coincident with that in Architecture. Its first appearance is in the monsters which it now became the fashion to introduce in the porches of churches, for the pillars that supported their roofs to rest upon,—partly for ornament, and partly, as I said before, as talismans or guardians, to frighten away evil spirits. Griffins and lions, the former implying the union of the divine and human nature in the person of Christ, the latter the strength and watchfulness of the Church, appear most frequently in this position, couched and grasping in their paws, or talons, wolves, serpents and similar beasts of prey, typical of Satan. They are generally well executed, often admirably. Among the finest in this style are the two lions of the porch of S. Cyriaco at Ancona; they are of red marble, and full of spirit and fire—most masterly, both in conception and execution; the one grasps a ram, the other a large snake, which bites him, however, on the breast. Sometimes these monsters were set up on the roofs of cathedrals; the bronze Hippogryph, once perched on the East end of that of Pisa, but now translated

to the Campo Santo, is an instance of this.* In process of time the different states of Italy adopted them as their crests,† and sculptured them at the doors of their town-halls and public buildings; the fashion gradually spread over Europe, and is retained to this day in the supporters of the heraldic escutcheons of kings and noblemen. Heraldry is, in fact, the last remnant of the ancient Symbolism, and a legitimate branch of Christian Art; the griffins and unicorns, fesses and cheverons, the very tinctures or colours, are all symbolical,—each has its mystic meaning, singly and in combination, and thus every genuine old coat of arms preaches a lesson of chivalric honour and Christian principle to those that inherit it,—truths little suspected now-a-days in our Heralds' Offices!

But with the exception of these mystic watchers, this Second period of Lombard Sculpture, or as I should now more correctly term it, this Sculpture of the Freemasons, was characterised by a gradual abandonment of the purely Teutonic element, the monstrous imagery of the earlier age, and a more studious imitation of Byzantine or ecclesiastical models. The point of transition may be fixed at Modena, where the chisel of Wiligelmus, (William,)

* Theories innumerable have been broached regarding this creature, the Chimæra and puzzle of Pisa. See Morrona's 'Pisa Illustrata,' tom. i, p. 320, ed. 8vo., and Cicognara, tom. i, p. 187.

† The whole series are represented in mosaic on the pavement of the Cathedral at Siena—to be noticed hereafter.

an artist highly celebrated at the beginning of the twelfth century, has impartially illustrated the history of the ante-diluvian world, the passion of Our Lord, the legend of S. Gimignano, and, in one singular bas-relief, the exploits of Arthur of Britain—the grotesque being everywhere abandoned for the serious, yet the serious as yet unennobled by a purer design or loftier expression; while the artist seems still to have sought for originality apart from the Byzantine compositions.*—A closer adherence to these is evinced in the vast bas-relief of the Last

* The bas-relief representing King Arthur decorates a doorway near the Campanile. The story of S. Gimignano, bishop of Ravenna, will be found above a small door on the southern side of the Cathedral, opening into the nave. The scenes represented are, his journey to Constantinople—the storm that assailed his vessel after embarkation, and which, on being awakened, like our Saviour, he quieted by a command—his healing the daughter of the Emperor Jovian, for which he had been summoned from Ravenna—his reception from the Emperor of a rich chalice as an offering of gratitude—his interview with Attila, whom he saluted as the Scourge of God—and his funeral obsequies. I cannot say much for these sculptures. But those above and between the three doors of the principal façade, are not void of merit, and the Sacrifice, especially, of Cain and Abel, to the right of the principal entrance, is remarkable for a figure with its hands tied behind its back, kneeling on one knee before our Saviour, possibly a personification of human nature bound with sin and corruption since the Fall.—Finally, in the chapel at the extremity of the Southern nave, (lateral to the elevated choir,) are the series of subjects representing the Passion of Our Lord, very rude, but occasionally spirited, as in the groups representing Our Saviour waking the Apostles, and his Arraignment before Pilate—where his figure is expressive and dignified, although the face is very inferior.—For a specimen of Wiligelmus, see Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 7.

Judgment executed a few years later on the façade of the Cathedral at Ferrara; the execution is, however, little, if at all, superior. But a decided revival, however faint, is perceptible in the sculptures of Biduino, over the door of the Baptistery at Pisa,* and though the bronze gate cast by his contemporary, the still more celebrated Bonanno, in 1180, for the Cathedral of Pisa, was destroyed by fire in the sixteenth century, a similar one, executed by that artist six years afterwards for that of Monreale, in Sicily, still exists, and, judging by the engravings in the folio of the Duca di Serradifalco and the 'Storia della Pittura Italiana' of Rosini,† amply vindicates his improvement on the style of his predecessors. In composition, Bonanno adheres closely to the traditional subjects of Byzantium, but intersperses a few of the Lombard monsters in the foliage and ornaments.‡

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* See Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 7.

† See the work by the patriotic Duke, entitled 'Del Duomo di Monreale e di altre Chiese Siculo-Normanne Ragionamenti Tre,' Palermo, fol. 1838, tav. 4, and tom. i, p. 162 of the 'Storia,' &c. by the learned and accomplished Professor Rosini, of Pisa.

‡ There is another very curious bronze door at Benevento, which I know only by the engravings of Ciampini, who considers it of the end of the eleventh, or beginning of the twelfth century.—*Vett. Monimenta*, tom. ii, p. 24, sqq.—Some of the compositions evince originality; the devil is represented in human shape, as by the Byzantines,—but my impression from the style is, that it is of Italian workmanship. The Hon. Keppel Craven speaks of this door as "sculptured with considerable skill."—*Tour through the Southern Provinces of Naples*, 4to, p. 27.

Bonanno, it has been conjectured, may have been Niccola's first instructor; be that as it may, there can be no doubt that he prepared the way for him, that he was his lineal ancestor in art, and that in Sculpture as in Architecture, the honour of revival, South of the Alps, rests with Pisa.

Nevertheless, an artist existed contemporary with Bonanno, isolated and without succession, to whom I should assign the palm of superiority over every sculptor of Italy anterior to the great Niccola. I allude to Benedetto degli Antelami, of Parma, whose bas-relief of the Deposition is preserved in the Duomo. It is beautiful in composition, (slightly varied from the Byzantine,) full of expression, and far less rude in workmanship than one would expect from the period when it was executed, 1178,—probably in the youth of the artist.* In the sculptures of the adjacent Baptistery, built from his designs many years afterwards, his mind, if not his hand, may be recognised everywhere, within and without, in an exuberance of fancy and allegory akin to the earlier age of S. Michele rather than the commencement of the thirteenth century, yet admirably in keeping with the peculiar character of the architecture with which it is associated. So warm indeed was the enthusiasm excited by these sculptures, that Fra Salimbene, one of the old chroniclers of Parma, mentions that his father, debarred by extreme old age and decrepitude from evincing his patriotism in

* It will be found in the third chapel to the right of the nave.

any other manner, sat daily from morning to night in front of the Baptistery, while in the course of erection, in order to prevent idle children from injuring them.* Incidents of this description are not uncommon in the early history of the arts in Italy.†

Such was the state of Italian Sculpture at the period when Lombard was superseded by Gothic Architecture South of the Alps. Bonanno and Antelami were men of genius, and had they lived fifty years later, would have made themselves an immortal name; but they had not the advantages of their great successor, or possibly that sure tact and prophetic instinct by which he struck out and applied the master principle of Christian Art might have been anticipated.

I have only to add, that no sooner had the school of Niccola Pisano firmly established itself in Italy, than it attracted to itself and absorbed every other

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* *Cicognara*, tom. i, p. 297.—Among the more interesting of these sculptures are the bas-relief in the lunette over the Southern door, and the statues of the twelve months, and two supernumerary figures, Youth (apparently) and Age, in the interior. The Baptistery is said to have been commenced in 1196.

† With the specimens of this early revival, mentioned in the text, may be associated the statues of Our Saviour and the Apostles, now ranged along the Southern aisle of S. Zenone, at Verona—very stiff, and a family likeness runs through the heads, the same type, with a peculiar under-jaw and projecting beard, that appears in some of the old pictures in the Palazzo del Consiglio—yet full of solemn expression, with the drapery broad and flowing, as if through a reminiscence or study of the antique. The SS. Matthew, Bartholomew, Andrew and Philip, struck me most.

throughout the peninsula,—and that the Northern origin of the majority of the names, above enumerated, of early Italian sculptors—as well as of those omitted as of less importance, (as Gruamonte and Enrico, who worked at Pistoja, Rodolfino, pupil of Gerardo Pisano, also employed there, M. Roberto of Lucca, Gerardo and Anselmo, who sculptured the bas-reliefs of the Porta Romana at Milan,* &c. &c.,) affords a strong presumption in support of the opinion, that the intellectual life of Modern Europe, South as well as North of the Alps, is essentially Teutonic.†

SECTION 2. *Mosaics.*

I now turn to the Mosaics of this period of imperfect revival.

I mentioned in a former letter, that the Byzantine revival under the Comneni extended its influence into Italy, and that the mosaicists imported thither during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries educated Italian pupils, or rather communicated that impulse to the native genius which led it to seek distinction in the same path—a path, you will recollect, till then untrodden by the artists of the West, mosaic-work having, from the time of the Romans, remained an exclusive monopoly of Greece.

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* These mark perhaps the lowest degradation of art in Italy. See a specimen, engraved, in Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 7.

† See Cicognara's very interesting chapter, the second of the third book of his great history.—Not that he would agree in the conclusion in the text.

Of these pupils * three stand pre-eminent and deserve our utmost respect, Fra Giacomo (or, by abbreviation, Mino) da Turrita, of Siena, a Franciscan friar—Andrea Tafi, of Florence—and Gaddo Gaddi, of the same city, the friend alike of Tafi and of Cimabue, but disciple, strictly speaking, of neither, although he worked in company with the former, and may have profited in design by the example of the latter. Each of these artists, in fact, learnt of the Greeks independently of the other, and for a great part of their lives they were all three contemporary.

Fra Giacomo was the eldest; he was probably born towards the close of the twelfth century. His earliest work is the mosaic of the tribune of the Baptistery at Florence, commenced, as the inscription informs us, in 1225,† and in which the Virgin's face has the

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* The earliest ascertained mosaic of the Italico-Byzantine revival is that executed in 1220, by Solsternus, on the façade of the Cathedral at Spoleto. It is far inferior to the works I am about to describe.

† I insert this inscription from the 'Ricerche Architettoniche sopra il tempio di S. Giovanni,' &c., Flor. 8vo. 1820, p. 62,—compared with the copy in the 'Notizie Istorico-Critiche di Fra Giacomo da Torrita,' by the Abate Luigi de Angelis, Siena, 8vo. 1821:—

"Annus Papa tibi nonus currebat Honori
Ac Federice tuo quintus Monarca decori
Viginti quinque Christi cum mille ducentis
Tempora currebant per secula cuncta manentis
Hoc opus incepit lux Mai tunc duodena
Quod Domini nostri conservet gratia plena
Sancti Francisci frater fuit hoc operatus
Jacobus in tali præ cunctis arte probatus."

—The description of Giacomo as "Sancti Francisci frater" shows that the inscription must be later than 1225 by at least three years, S. Francis, who died on the 4th October, 1226, not

same sweet expression for which the Sienese school is so distinguished throughout its history. After executing this work, he seems to have quitted Florence, and above half a century elapses before he reappears in the history of art.

Meanwhile the consuls of the wool-trade, the guardians of the Baptistery, determining to incrust the cupola with mosaics, but finding no one competent to the task—Mino probably being engaged elsewhere—sent Andrea Tafi, the most accomplished painter that Florence could then boast of, to Venice, to crave assistance from the Greek artists employed there in the Cathedral of S. Mark's. He returned successful, accompanied by one Maestro Apollonio, who initiated him into the secrets of the craft, and executed in company with him the greater part of the mosaics still existing on the cupola,* Andrea himself completing

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having been canonized till July, 1228. The date of 1225 harmonises correctly with the ninth year of Honorius III., and with the fifth of the Emperor Frederick II., dating from 1220, the year of his coronation at Rome, although he had been emperor for many years previously. According to Professor Del Rosso, Richa and other authorities, citing the collections of the Senator C. Strozzi, the employment of Fra Giacomo, under the year 1225, on the decoration of the tribune, is asserted in the records of the 'Arte della Lana.' An accurate extract from these would be important.

* Laterally to the Last Judgment, presently to be described, five rows of mosaics run round the cupola, the highest representing the different orders of the heavenly hierarchy, adoring the Almighty, standing at full length and blessing; the second, the history of the world from the Creation to the Deluge; the third, the history of Joseph from his Dream in childhood to the Meeting with Jacob in Goshen; the fourth, the history of Our Saviour,—the fifth, that of John the Baptist. Several of these

the Judgment which overhangs the tribune by the addition of the gigantic figure of Our Saviour—unless indeed, as I am inclined to believe, the whole of that compartment be his own. It is the old Byzantine composition, resembling in outline that at Torcello, but less mystical and more dramatic in its details, as might be expected from a Florentine. Our Saviour, seated as usual on the rainbow, stretches forth his hands, the palm of the right open towards the blest, the back of the left, repulsively, towards the condemned; above him a company of angels display the instruments of the passion, while the Twelve Apostles, headed by the Virgin, are seated on his right, and the Saints of the Old Testament, headed by the Baptist, on his left; the graves open below—marble troughs, disproportionately long and narrow, like the tombs attributed to the patriarchs in Syria; the spirits of the just are received by angels, those of the bad by devils, who lead them away respectively to paradise or hell; the attitude of one of the reprobate souls, shrinking back into its tomb, dismayed at the sight of the demon about to pounce upon it, is excellent, and the idea was constantly repeated afterwards. Lastly, instead of Abraham sitting, alone, in para-

compartments (as the Creation of Adam and Eve, and those that immediately follow, the Building of the Ark, &c.) seem to have been recomposed in the process of reparation. Of the original compositions, those from Joseph's history display ease and truth in the attitudes, and a natural expression of feeling; the history of Our Saviour is inferior again,—but from the eighth compartment of the life of the Baptist (his reproval of Herod), to the end, the superiority reasserts itself, and the burial of S. John is excellent.

dise, the three patriarchs are seated side by side in solemn state within the gate, each with several souls in his lap; and on the opposite side Satan, no longer preserving the Byzantine reminiscence of the human face and form divine, has acquired his full extravagance of Gothic and Dantesque deformity.

Altogether, and making allowance for the head and expression of Our Saviour, which are decidedly inferior, this mosaic strikes me as surpassing any previous effort of Italian art; and I may cite it, along with the improvement which Tafi introduced in the mechanical workmanship of mosaic, in justification of the reputation in which he was held throughout Italy, and in excuse for the epitaph with which the enthusiasm of his fellow-citizens honoured his memory,

"Qui giace Andrea, ch' opre leggiadre e belle
Fece in tutta Toscana, ed ora è ito
A far vago lo regno delle stelle." *

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* See the life of Tafi by Vasari, who ascribes to him and to Niccola Pisano equal honour, as the restorers of Mosaic and Sculpture.—I hope hereafter to do justice to Vasari's merits as an historian of Art, but I may here mention his honesty and singleness of purpose, his justice and reverence for truth, his freedom from sectarian or provincial jealousy, his deep sense—founded on religion—of the source and legitimate ends of Christian Art, and his appreciation and indeed enthusiasm for the works of his predecessors, even of schools that his teachers and associates despised, as qualities pervading his work throughout, and counterbalancing the inexactitude in point of dates and want of criticism, generally, which he shares with all his contemporaries. Thus qualified, I have the highest opinion of Vasari's lives,—they are a treasury of information, and in a moral point of view, a legacy more precious than rubies to the sons of genius, for virtue is his spirit's dwelling-place, he sympathises with all that is loveable in human nature, and never apologises for vice.

I am not acquainted with any other works of Tafi, though, except for the date, 1297, I should have ascribed to him the mosaic in the absis of S. Miniato, so strong is the resemblance between the face of the Saviour there and in the Baptistery, the only difference being in the superior perfection of the type, and the loftier dignity of the expression and attitude, in the later mosaic.

Andrea died in 1294, in his eighty-first year, leaving but one distinguished pupil, Buffalmacco, who continued the line of Italico-Byzantine revival, not in mosaic, but in painting.

Fra Giacomo, in the meanwhile, had been in nowise idle during what appears to us his long retreat from public view. He had acquired a dexterity and finish of workmanship surpassing even that of his Florentine rival, and while the latter had been attempting to improve and extend the range of dramatic composition, his own endeavours had been directed towards the perfection of the traditional types of the Saviour, the Virgin, and the Apostles, and to the infusion of a deeper meaning and purpose into that early Christian symbolism of which we have noticed such interesting examples in the mosaics of Ravenna, and which had been resuscitated in Italy in that of S. Clemente at the commencement of the preceding century. It is not a little interesting to observe the distinctive tendencies of the dramatic and contemplative schools of Florence and Siena already in full activity and antagonism. But it would be injustice not to add, that he had greatly improved in design

also, and that in this respect, as in native genius, he far surpassed Andrea Tafi.

These merits of Fra Giacomo are alike conspicuous in the noble mosaics executed, with the assistance of his pupil Fra Giacomo da Camerino, for Pope Nicholas IV., in the tribunes of S. Maria Maggiore and S. Giovanni Laterano at Rome, towards the close of the thirteenth century.

The former represents the Coronation of the Virgin. Christ and his mother are seated on the same throne within an orb of azure studded with stars, representing heaven; Our Saviour, his face full of calm benignity, places the crown on her head, while she presses her hand meekly on her breast, and bends forward to receive it. Angels gaze in adoration, and several of the Apostles, with S. Francis, stand in a row below, on the banks of the Jordan. The whole is singularly august and grand, both as regards the general composition and the individual figures.*

But the mosaic of S. Giovanni is still more so, and in conception is at once original and sublime. Its subject is the union of heaven and earth by baptism. The head of Christ, majestic and benignant, looks down from heaven, indicated by a grand semicircular orb of intense blue—the little clouds scattered over its surface assuming every colour of the rainbow (as in the setting sun) while they float across his glory. Above the Saviour the Father is represented, not as

* This mosaic has lately been engraved in the work of the Chev. Bünsen on the basilicas of Rome, plate 46.

usually by a hand from heaven, but by a face veiled with wings, on either side of which a company of angels are symmetrically ranged. Below these two Persons of the Godhead the Holy Ghost, descending like a dove, sheds the Trinal influence, in the similitude of a stream of water, upon the Cross, elevated on the summit of the mystic Calvary, the Mount of Paradise, and decorated with ten precious gems, artificially jointed into each other, in the centre of which is inserted a medallion representing the Baptism of Our Saviour. The spiritual waters, falling from the angles of the cross, are ultimately collected at its base, forming a deep "well of life," at which stags are drinking, symbolical of the faithful. From this well four streams descend the mountain, the four rivers of paradise, or of the gospels, to water the earth. They sink into it and are lost, but reappear in the foreground, poured out of the urns of river-gods, one of which is designated, by the inscription, "Jordanes,"—the united streams forming the "river of the waters of life." The river forms several cataracts, and is in one place confined by a dam. Boats filled with passengers are seen floating down the stream, souls in the shape of children are bathing in it, or sporting with swans and other water-fowl, others, like little winged Cupids, amuse themselves on the shore,* among peacocks, cocks, the hen and

* Reminding one, involuntarily, of the passage in Wordsworth's Platonic Ode:—

"Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,

Our

chickens, and other Christian symbols; while, towering over them, like "trees of righteousness planted by the waters," stand a company of Saints and Apostles, headed by the Virgin and S. John the Baptist,—and lastly, in the centre, though very small, and immediately at the foot of the Cross, and between the four mystic streams, appears the gate of Paradise, a vast fortress, flanked with towers, and guarded by the Cherub, standing before it with his drawn sword, the tree of life rising above it, and the phœnix, apparently, the emblem of the resurrection, reposing on its summit.*

Both these mosaics are as beautifully executed as they are nobly and profoundly composed; the *commettitura* is perfect. That of S. Maria Maggiore was finished in 1289, but Mino died, it would appear, before the other was completed, and Gaddo Gaddi, the youngest of the distinguished Tuscan trio, was invited to Rome, as we shall presently see, expressly for the purpose of finishing it.

This celebrated artist—the ancestor of a family, illustrious alike for talent and moral worth, and which ranked for centuries among the noble houses of Florence—was born in 1239, nine years after Tafi, and

Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

* This mosaic has been engraved in Chev. Bünsen's work, pl. 47.

one year before Cimabue, with both of whom he maintained a warm and steady friendship through life. His first instructors in design were probably certain Greek artists, who had been invited to Florence to paint the lower church of S. Maria Novella. He was afterwards employed by Tafi as his assistant in the mosaics of the Baptistery, which he completed by adding the row of prophets which range all round it, below the windows. The merit of these obtained him independent employment in the Cathedral, where he executed the Coronation of the Virgin, immediately above the Great Western door, inside,—an imposing composition, but still very Greek; it was reckoned, however, the most beautiful mosaic that had till then been seen in Italy, and the fame he gained by it procured him, in 1292, the summons to Rome above alluded to. He appears to have spent several years there. After finishing the mosaic of Fra Giacomo, he worked in the ancient basilica of S. Peter's, destroyed by Julius II., and lastly, in 1308, at S. Maria Maggiore, where he executed on the façade of entrance, now shadowed by the Loggia della Benedizione, the series of mosaics from which alone we can duly estimate his merits. They are disposed in two rows, the upper representing Our Saviour, attended by the Virgin, the Baptist and four Apostles; the lower the legendary history of the foundation of the basilica. These are his *chef-d'œuvre*. They are Greek certainly, but scarcely more so than the frescoes of Cimabue, and in design, grandeur and dignity, in the majesty of the Saviour and the beauty

and benignity of the Virgin, are unsurpassed by any productions of the time.*

After completing this remarkable work, at the age of threescore and ten, the venerable artist returned to his native Florence,† to seek repose from his labours, which he found in death a year or two afterwards, in 1312, and was honourably buried by his son, the painter Taddeo, in the cloisters of S. Croce.‡

* John, a rich patrician of Rome, being childless, and desirous of leaving the Virgin Mary his heir, besought her to signify to him in what manner it would please her that he should do so. She appeared to him in a dream, and commanded that he should build a church on that part of the Esquiline which should be found covered with snow. Informing Pope Liberius, they went immediately to the spot, accompanied by the clergy and people, and the snow was found covering the ground precisely according to the ground-plan of the predestined edifice.—The Church (S. Maria ad nives, as it was originally named) was reared forthwith at the expense of John. The legend is a little varied in the mosaics:—The First represents the Virgin, with the child in her arms, appearing to Pope Liberius, sleeping,—the Second, a similar vision to the patrician, John,—in the Third, John is seen kneeling before the Pope on his throne, and in the Fourth, Our Saviour and the Virgin pour down the snow, and Liberius traces the plan of the new church, as marked out by it. One version indeed asserts that the instant the Pope touched the earth, the foundations of the church yawned open of themselves. —Above these four mosaics appear Our Saviour in glory, a majestic figure, attended by four angels, with the Virgin and the Baptist on his right and left, and next them, respectively, S. Paul and S. John, S. James, and S. Andrew.

† Gaddo was a painter as well as a mosaicist, but very few of his works in that line remain. The most interesting I am acquainted with is a S. Lawrence, in excellent preservation, in the possession of Colonel Lindsay of Balcarres—a precious relic, a leaf from a branch, remote, little regarded, and early withered, on the tree of art.

‡ His portrait is to be seen, according to Vasari, in the

Gaddo Gaddi was the last of the great Italian mosaicists. The rapid improvement of painting under Giotto, and the superior resources of fresco, superseded their art. Beauty and rapidity carried the day against grandeur and durability. Moreover, the Byzantine associations of mosaic were uncongenial to the Gothic architecture, which had by this time become the vogue in Italy. On reckoning up the mosaics mentioned in these few pages, or recorded elsewhere, I think you will find that, with few and those equivocal exceptions, they were all executed for churches built in the earlier Contemplative style of the Latins and Lombards.* When the church of Assisi was ready for decoration, though mosaic had made greater progress than painting, and Fra Giacomo, a mosaicist of the Franciscan order, was already flourishing, fresco was resorted to in preference.

Nevertheless the schools of Fra Giacomo and Gaddi lingered on for many years in Rome and Tuscany. Adeodato Cosmati, educated in the former,† was the parent of a family of mosaicists

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Marriage of the Virgin, painted by his son Taddeo in the Baroncelli chapel at S. Croce,—with Andrea Tafi standing beside him. Vasari quotes a "libretto antico" for the particulars he has furnished us with of Gaddo's life.

* It is only, I believe, in Sicily—exceptional in every respect through the strange association of races—that mosaics are found in churches of Gothic architecture.

† He was a pupil probably, either of Fra Giacomo, or of his disciple Fra Giacomo da Camerino, who worked under him at S. Maria Maggiore and in S. Giovanni.

much employed at Orvieto, and elsewhere in the Roman territory;* and Cavallini, a pupil (it is believed) of Adeodato, distinguished himself by his mosaics in the tribune of S. Maria in Trastevere,† and afterwards assisted Giotto, then a very young man, in the celebrated 'Navicella' or 'Ship of S. Peter,' worked by him in mosaic for the basilica of the 'Prince of the Apostles.' But the temptation was irresistible, and although by no means young, Cavallini abandoned his art for that of his youthful friend, and became one of the most distinguished painters of the Giottesque school.

Of Gaddo's followers, Vicino of Pisa, who won the applause of his fellow-citizens by completing the mosaics in the tribune of the Duomo in a style much superior to that of the artists who had commenced them, was the only one who attained distinction, unless indeed we are to reckon in this succession the celebrated Orcagna, summoned as late as 1360 to work in mosaic at Orvieto,—a fair intimation that the school of the Cosmati was then either degenerated or extinct.—But Orcagna stands apart in this, as in other peculiar excellences, and with his honoured name we may take leave of this interesting department of the Italico-Byzantine revival.‡

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* See Dellavalle's history of the Duomo of Orvieto, p. 264.

† Ghiberti, the celebrated sculptor, speaks in high praise of them,—"Ardirei a dire in muro non avere veduto di quella materia lavorare mai meglio." Commentario, &c. printed in *Cicognara*, tom. ii, p. 101.—They are still to be seen there.

‡ Angelo Gaddi inherited from his grandfather the technical

SECTION 3.—*Painting.*

WE have only now to notice the Painters of this transition period, members of a class depressed for many ages below the mosaicists,* but who were about to regain all and more than the respect and influence they had enjoyed in the sunny days of Grecian art,—an ascendancy which the patronage of the powerful orders of S. Domenic and S. Francis mainly contributed to ensure for them; almost every individual work which I shall have occasion to notice in the concluding pages of this letter, was executed for one or other of these sister communities, and consequently, in connection with that Gothic Architecture which sprang from the same new and strong impulse that then pervaded Christendom. The artists I am about to mention were not, indeed, the fathers of Italian painting—a title that belongs, strictly speaking, to Giotto—but their genius and their virtues, and, it may be, the noble birth of more than one of them,† made the name of Painter honourable, and they prepared the way for him. These

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knowledge of the mosaicists, and turned it to good account in repairing the mosaics of the Baptistery. But after his time the art would appear to have become quite extinct at Florence. Alessandro Baldovinetti, nearly a century afterwards, acquired it *de novo* from a German, and in his turn taught Domenico del Ghirlandajo.

* Strictly speaking, the mosaicists ranked as painters. Fra Giacomo (among other examples) signs himself 'Pictor' on his mosaics.

† As of Giunta, for instance, and Cimabue.

artists, three in number like the three great mosaicists, and not unlike them in their character and relative excellence in art, were Guido of Siena, Giunta of Pisa, and Cimabue of Florence, the master of Giotto.

In Painting, as in Mosaic, Siena led the way to improvement; the Madonna of Guido, in the church of S. Domenico, was painted in 1221, nineteen years before the birth of Cimabue. It is still unquestionably Greek in character, but displays a wonderful advance towards the modern style, with the same grace and sweetness that I noticed in speaking of the Madonna executed four years later in the tribune of the Baptistery by the mosaicist Fra Giacomo; both artists may possibly have been disciples of the same master.* Guido's pupils and successors would seem to have been numerous rather than excellent; a long period elapses before their works, as preserved in the different churches and in the Gallery of the Academy, betray any symptoms of improvement, and, with the exception of Ugolino, author of the Ma-

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* It is engraved in Agincourt, *Peinture*, pl. 107, and in Rosini, tav. 4.—The inscription is as follows, with the addition of the date 1221 :—

"Me Guido de Senis diebus depinxit amenis,
Quem Christus lenis nullis velit agere penis,"

—"diebus amenis" being an allusion to the concession, that year, by the Emperor Frederick II. of the 'gabella delle porte,' or entrance-duties, and of the right of striking money, of both of which his grandfather, Barbarossa, had deprived the Sienese in punishment for their having sided against him in his struggle with their fellow-citizen, Pope Alexander III.—*Lettere Sanesi*, tom. i, pp. 237 sqq.

donna of the Orsanmichele at Florence—a work of singular and almost unearthly beauty—it was not till the influence of Niccola Pisano had been felt at Siena that the school produced an equal to its original patriarch.* The spirit, nevertheless, of the

* One peculiar feature in the history of art at Siena, is its close association with history. The Crucifix carried before the army at the glorious battle of Monte-Aperto in 1260, the Madonna, once the altar-piece of the Cathedral, and on which the city was formally bestowed as a gift before the conflict, and a second Madonna, painted *ex voto* in gratitude for the victory—all of them works of the thirteenth century, are still preserved there, the former in the Cathedral, the second in the Oratory of S. Ansano in Castel Vecchio, the third in the Cappella del Voto, attached to the Cathedral.—Diotisalvi del Maestro Guido, pupil evidently of that master, and who flourished in 1227 and 1250, and indeed till 1278, (*Lett. Sanesi*, tom. i, pp. 251 and 273,) seems to have been the most distinguished Sienese artist between Guido and the two rivals at the close of the thirteenth century, Mino and Duccio. For one of his Madonnas (in the Servi at Siena) see Rosini, tav. 6.—Ugolino is also said to have preserved the manner of Guido. His Madonna at the Orsanmichele is enshrined in the famous tabernacle of Orcagna, to be spoken of in the ensuing letter. Baldinucci assigns it the date of 1284,—*Notizie, &c., life of Andrea Orcagna.* It is much to be regretted that the great altar-pieces painted by him for the high altars of S. Croce and S. Maria Novella, at Florence, have been destroyed or lost, as in all probability they might have warranted my classing him with Mino and Duccio at the head of the Sienese school, properly so called, as born of the influence of Niccola Pisano. Dellavalle describes the S. Croce picture as of great merit, especially the six compartments of the *gradino*, representing the Passion; it was removed from the high altar when Vasari renewed the ciborium, and in Dellavalle's time was preserved in the upper dormitory of the convent, at the head of the stairs. *Lett. Sanesi*, tom. ii, p. 202. According to a MS. statement by the Cav. T. Puccini, cited by Masselli, the recent annotator on Vasari,[a]

[a] P. 1152, *Appendix*, of his most commodious and useful edition, Florence, 2 vols. 8vo., 1832-8.

Semi-Byzantine revival long lingered there, and formed, as we shall see, the animating principle of a distinct succession of artists, continually struggling with the tendencies of the age to naturalism, to the antique and the Cinquecento.

Guido's contemporary, Giunta Pisano, as he is usually styled, although descended from a noble family, surnamed Del Colle, of Pistoja, enjoyed a reputation far more extensive, and was for many years accounted the prince of Italian painters. He

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it was sold to an Englishman "per pochi scudi," at the beginning of the present century.—The altar-piece of S. Maria Novella was subsequently removed to the Cappella degli Spagnuoli, but was missing when Dellavalle wrote. From comparison with the altar-piece of S. Croce, Dellavalle questions Vasari's correctness in attributing to Ugolino the Madonna of Orsanmichele, on account of the superior excellence of the latter. I cannot doubt, however, its being a Sienese picture, and of the Semi-Byzantine period. Baron von Rumohr (*Ital. Forschungen*, tom. ii, p. 25) acknowledges that he has discovered nothing certain concerning Ugolino. For the early masters of Siena, generally, anterior to Mino and Duccio, see the *Lettere Sanesi*, tom. i, p. 271 sqq.—I shall have frequent occasion to cite this work,—it is of high value, from its copious citations of original documents in the Archivio delle Riformagioni, the Opera of the Duomo, the great Hospital, the Biccherna and other public offices of the city—the best and surest evidence on which the genealogy and history of art can be grounded. Dellavalle is certainly rather partial, or (as I would rather term it) patriotic,—but so all such historians necessarily are, every district of Italy having been formerly an independent state, and naturally retaining still the prejudices engendered by early rivalry with its neighbours. Vasari is freest from this demerit, and Lanzi's impartiality is most praiseworthy,—the defects in his 'Storia Pittorica della Italia' are incidental to his plan, not his judgment, critical or moral.

was already an artist in 1202,* and is styled 'Maestro' in 1203 and 1210,† and probably shone without a rival twenty years afterwards when invited to Assisi by the celebrated Fra Elias, to decorate with his pencil the Upper church of the Franciscans.‡ He began, as usual, with the tribune and transepts, which he entirely covered with his frescoes, now, alas! almost obliterated by time; they are literally peeling off the walls, and little is discernible except the general outline of composition, and in many cases not even that. The Crucifixion of Our

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* This appears from a deed printed by Professor Ciampi, at p. 141 of his 'Notizie Inedite della Sagrestia Pistoiese, de' Belli Arredi, del Campo Santo Pisano,' &c.—Flor. 4to, 1810,—a most valuable work abounding in original documents illustrative of the history of early Italian art. Giunta is styled in this document "Juncta quondam Guidocti pict."—See the same page for the proof of his family, &c. For the works of his Greek predecessors at Pisa see Rosini's 'Proemio' to the first volume of history.

† In public documents cited by Morrona in his section devoted to Giunta, tom. ii, p. 116 of the 'Pisa Illustrata,' ed. 8vo.—I have ranked Guido first, the Madonna of 1221 implying the maturity of that artist, while the great works of Giunta belong to the middle of the century. Morrona, (tom. iii, p. 400,) and Rosini, (tom. i, pp. 114 sqq.,) incline to attribute to Giunta the frescoes in the church of S. Piero in Grado about four miles from Pisa, and this (among other reasons) on the ground of their striking similarity in style to the frescoes at Assisi. Specimens of them are engraved among the folio plates of the 'Storia della Pitt. Ital.,' tav. D.

‡ The year 1230 commonly assigned would be too early, I suspect, as the walls, though finished in that year, would hardly be ready so soon for the pencil; but he was certainly there in 1236, the date inscribed on a portrait of S. Francis by his hand, formerly preserved there.

Saviour, and that of S. Peter, in the Southern transept, the Death of the Virgin and her Coronation in the tribune, the four Evangelists in the vault overhanging the choir, and certain Apostles and Saints scattered through the Eastern part of the church, are among the least decayed, but fifty years hence the Evangelists, and perhaps such of the Saints as are sheltered by the triforia, will be the sole witnesses to Giunta's merits as a fresco-painter.*— To attempt an estimate of these merits would be presumptuous amid such a wreck of fame and talent. But I may venture to say that his figures are dignified, though very Greek, that his compositions, so far as recognisable, seem to be purely Byzantine, with very little variation from the traditional arrangement, that his taste is decidedly dramatic and anti-symbolical, and that he had undergone no influence from Niccola Pisano, who indeed was a younger man. In short, without any wish of forcing a parallel, Giunta strikes me as holding much the same place in the painting of this peculiar epoch as Andrea Tafi does in mosaic. These frescoes, after an interval of absence, were resumed in 1253, and completed before 1255, in which year Giunta

* Vasari errs in attributing these to Cimabue, whose works are confined to the nave of the Upper Church.—See Agincourt, *Peinture*, pl. 111, for the fresco of Simon Magus' flight through the air, now almost wholly obliterated. The distribution of the angels in the Crucifixion, catching the blood from Our Saviour's side and weeping in the air, shows feeling and invention in the true Byzantine spirit.

had again returned to Pisa.* He probably died soon afterwards, as his name does not recur in the records or chronicles of the time.

Of his distemper, or easel paintings, a few are preserved at Pisa, Assisi and elsewhere. They strike me as far inferior to his frescoes; they are completely in the Greek style, and little, if at all superior to it; in his crucifixes, the Christ is always hideously emaciated, in accordance with the prejudice then current as to the personal appearance of Our Saviour.† The most interesting of these smaller works is the portrait of S. Francis, preserved in the sacristy of the Lower church at Assisi, a full length, the features copied from a still older Greek portrait at S. Maria degli Angeli, said to have been painted on the board on which the Saint slept. The head is a remarkable one, and I have little doubt, a correct likeness; the eyes are deeply set and close to each other.

Giunta left some pupils at Pisa, but they were a puny race, too weak to transform themselves into Giotteschi,‡—it is on the elder arts, Architecture

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* *Rosini*, tom. i, p. 109.—He was certainly at Pisa in 1255, figuring as a feudal proprietor in a document of that year cited by Ciampi, *Notizie Inedite*, &c. p. 141.

† The best preserved of these crucifixes is in the north transept of the church of S. Maria degli Angeli, below Assisi. Lanzi praises it as exhibiting a knowledge of the naked figure, a power of exhibiting pain, and a manner in painting drapery, superior to the Byzantines. It is almost too painful to look upon, much less criticise.

‡ Specimens of their works may be seen in the gallery of the Academy. And consult Rosini, tom. i, pp. 150, 216, 258, and plates 5 and 6.

and Sculpture, that, from first to last, Pisa founds her peculiar praise and glory.—But a representative of his style, and possibly a scion of his school, long survived at Arezzo, in Margaritone, excellent as an architect and sculptor, but in painting distinguished only as the author of the hideous crucifix, now preserved in the loggia, or cloistral passage between the Capitolo, or chapter-house, at S. Croce, in Florence, and historically interesting as having been sent by him as a present to the illustrious Ghibelline chief, Farinata degli Uberti.* Margaritone died at an advanced age, worn out, it is said, with chagrin and vexation at finding the taste changed, and the honours borne away from him by a younger generation,†—to wit, by him of whom I must now speak, the third and most distinguished of the great painters of this transitional period, Giovanni Cimabue.

This illustrious man was born in 1240, of a noble Florentine family, otherwise named the Gualtieri. His turn for design evinced itself at a very early age. In the lack of native artists the Florentines had been compelled to invite a company of Greek painters to decorate the lower, or subterranean church of S. Maria Novella, belonging to the Domi-

* Before November, 1266, when Farinata was dead, and probably soon after the battle of Monte-Aperto, 1260.—He is described as 'Margaritus Pictor, filius quondam Magnani,' in a deed of 1262.—*Masselli's notes to Vasari.*

† See Vasari. But Margaritone had certainly abandoned the Byzantine style and risen to high and acknowledged excellence in Sculpture, under the influence of Niccola Pisano, so that I am rather incredulous of this melancholy ending.

nicans;* the works of these artists were an irresistible attraction to young Cimabue, who loitered beside

* There are a great many ancient frescoes, woefully defaced, in the chapels and cells of this part of the monastery, but though traces of Byzantine influence are very visible, I do not think any of them of pure Greek origin. They seem to be, for the most part, of a school elder than that of Giotto, but contemporary with him or his immediate successors, and strongly influenced by them. This subterranean church should rather be described as three extensive corridors, two of which branch off from the third at right angles to it in opposite directions, but at unequal distances from the entrance. The entrance is through the archway opening on the Chiostro Verde, immediately to the right of that into the Cappella degli Spagnuoli. The existing paintings are confined to the central corridor, right in front as you enter, and to the chapels to the right and left of it, and at the extremity, beyond a partition-wall opening with a wicket, which has been interposed in comparatively recent times. The following notes may assist inspection in a place so dark and gloomy:—To the left, on entering, a bas-relief of the Virgin and Child, and a female devotee kneeling, rude in execution, but graceful and dignified in conception:—Immediately beyond this, the door into the Stanza Mortuaria, in which there is an interesting early fresco of the Nativity, in which the child, just born, turns round its face to look at its mother, and one of the shepherds holds back his dog, who rises on his hind legs to bark at the angel,—some of the angels' heads are very like those in the large Madonna of Cimabue in the upper church; the thatch of the shed and the leaves of the shrubs, &c., are very carefully finished:—Beyond this chamber, three chapels, to the right of the corridor, between the second and third of which is interposed the modern partition wall, above alluded to; in the first, in the lunette of the right-hand wall, the Flagellation (apparently) of S. Antony in the tomb, and his Burial, very simple and beautiful; in the second, on the front wall, to the left, the embrace of Joachim and Anna at the Golden Gate of Jerusalem—her face young and beautiful, full of purity, sweetness and grace; an angel descending from heaven seems to introduce them, resting a hand on the head of each, pressing them towards each other, like children,—and to the right, the Birth of the Virgin—engraved

them, watching their progress, while his parents believed him conning his grammar in the adjacent school, kept for the instruction of the novices. His books too betrayed the usual symptoms of a newly awakened enthusiasm in the sketches of men, horses, houses, &c. with which their margins were disfigured, and before long his father found himself constrained to yield to an inclination so decided, and apprentice him to these foreign masters. He made rapid progress and speedily surpassed them. But the influence of this early Byzantine training was never effaced. His natural disposition, indeed, being to the grand and noble rather than the soft and refined, he had the less temptation to depart from the traditional types and models, and we find him accordingly, throughout his career, attempting to re-create, re-inspire and re-ennoble, rather than depart from them.

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by Agincourt, *Peinture*, pl. 109, as a work of the Greek painters, instructors of Cimabue, whereas it is evidently much more recent;—in the third, nothing worth notice:[a]—And finally in the chapel at the very extremity of the corridor opposite the door of entrance from the Chiostro Verde—on the left wall, the death of S. Jerome and the vision of two young monks of S. Martin's monastery at Tours, who heard the voices and the singing when Our Saviour, with the heavenly host and the spirits of the just, come down to receive his soul at Bethlehem,—and on the right-hand wall the apparition of S. Jerome to S. Augustine, and another subject, but both these are almost effaced.

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[a] One of these chapels, dedicated to S. Martin, was painted by Giocomo da Casentino, according to the 'Firenze Antica e Moderna,' tom. vi, p. 340. Vasari, however, does not mention it in his life of that artist.

His first great work was a Virgin and child, attended by angels, and seated on a lofty throne supported by three arches, under which appear the heads of four Apostles, very dignified, although the upper part of the picture, especially the Virgin, is quite Greek. This picture was executed for the S. Trinità, a church in Florence belonging to the monks of Vallombrosa, but it is now preserved in that treasury of primitive art, the gallery of the Academy.

His next important painting was the crucifix, now in the sacristy of S. Croce, executed for the Franciscans, the steady patrons of his subsequent career. The *Guardiano*, or Superior, of the monastery, who had given him the commission, was pleased with his performance; and carried him to Pisa, where he painted for the church of S. Francesco, in that city, another Madonna, now in the gallery of the Louvre,*—the head is Byzantine, but full of dignity.

These paintings established Cimabue's reputation, and soon afterwards, probably through the intervention of his friend the Guardiano, he received an invitation to Assisi, the head-quarters of the order, there to continue the decoration of the Upper church in fresco. He is supposed to have arrived there

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* Through the conquests of the French. Many of the early Italian paintings, not belonging to public galleries, were never restored; they now fill the first of the upper halls of the Louvre Gallery. The original exposition-catalogues, as issued under the Empire, usually specify the spot where each picture came from. They do so in the present instance.

about the year 1265, towards the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year of his age.*

After Giunta's death, it would appear that no Italian artist had been deemed worthy of filling his place and completing the work. Cimabue, therefore, found the roof and the walls of the nave a blank, ready for his pencil.† He commenced, as usual, by the roof, representing on the first of the groined vaults, the four Doctors of the Church, and on the third, the Saviour, the Virgin, the Baptist and S. Francis,—the Doctors full of dignity, but exactly resembling the Saints of the Menologion magnified—the Virgin and her companions noble in attitude and character, although still essentially Greek,—the Saviour, especially, has evidently been inspired by the mosaics. These vaults are in excellent preservation, the colours as brilliant nearly as when first laid on.‡ But I cannot, alas! say as

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* Notes to Vasari, Sienese edit., as quoted by Lanzi.

† The frescoes of the nave of the Lower church are attributed to him by Vasari, conjointly with some Greek painters whom he found working there,—but there is small probability of this. They seem to have been executed previously to the middle of the thirteenth century, when the walls were broken through to make the chapels. They are now scarcely recognisable. One of the most remarkable is the Meeting of the Virgin and S. John after the Crucifixion, on the right-hand wall,—but I should hardly have made it out but for the assistance of a drawing, one of a series made about thirty years ago by Signor Mariani, an artist still, I believe, living at Assisi, and the engraver of some interesting architectural views and sections of the two churches, the upper and lower, of S. Francesco.

‡ Each of the Doctors is represented at full length, sitting at his desk, studying the Scriptures, while Our Saviour appears

much for the remaining and more mature compositions. These, ranging along the nave in two distinct rows on the opposite walls, have been ruthlessly retouched and are in many places entirely obliterated. Those on the Southern wall represent the history of the Old Testament, those on the Northern that of the New, which is concluded on the Western wall, opposite the sanctuary, by the Ascension of Christ and the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles. The compositions are for the most part the traditional Byzantine ones, little varied from, but they are grandly given—the design is improved, the groups are well allied to, and discriminated from each other; and in those compositions in which the painter has been forced to be entirely original, the same merits are observable. They form altogether a noble series, and I would mention the Building of the Ark, the Sacrifice of Abraham, the Betrayal of Our Lord, and the Pietà, or Lamentation over the dead body of Christ, as especially worthy of admiration.*

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above, inspiring him in their interpretation. See Dr. Franz Kügler's interesting observation on the ornaments which surround these medallions, in which he recognises "a decided and not unsatisfactory approach to the antique."—*Handbook of Painting in Italy*, p. 34,—a very useful vademecum.

* It has been questioned of late years whether these are really works of Cimabue. Baron v. Rumohr (*Ital. Forschungen*, tom. ii, p. 67) inclines to attribute them to Spinello Aretino and his son Parri, Giottesque artists of the latter part of the fourteenth century. But, although it is possible that Spinello may have retouched them, the testimony of Vasari, and an unbroken tradition of five centuries, are not to be lightly questioned;

After completing these frescoes Cimabue returned to Florence, to set the seal on his reputation by his celebrated Madonna, painted for the chapel of the Ruccellai family in S. Maria Novella, of the Dominicans. You will gaze on it with interest, if not with admiration, for, independently of pictorial merit, it is linked with history. Charles of Anjou, King of Naples, passing through Florence while he was engaged in painting it, was taken to see it at the artist's bottega, or studio—as it would now be termed, in a garden outside the Porta S. Piero; rumour had been busy, but no one had as yet obtained a glimpse of it,—all Florence crowded in after him—nothing like it had till then been seen in Tuscany, and when finished, it was carried in solemn procession to the church, followed by the whole population, and with such triumph and rejoicings that the quarter where the painter dwelt obtained the name, which it has ever since retained, of Borgo Allegri.* Nor can I think that

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their position immediately above Giotto's life of S. Francis, (hereafter to be mentioned,) and which occupies the third and lowest range of compartments, proves their prior execution, and their style and character are precisely accordant with that of the undoubted works of Cimabue.

In the Carità, at Assisi, a ruined church, crumbling to decay, might still be seen three years ago, a gigantic Madonna, painted in fresco, and attributed to Cimabue—very Greek, but majestic and dignified. It probably no longer exists.—In S. Bernardino, at Perugia, on the Piazza di S. Francesco, is a Crucifix, dated 1272, which Prof. Rosini believes to be by Cimabue, and probably painted about the time of his works at Assisi.—*Storia*, &c., tom. i, p. 192.

* Vasari, on the authority of "certi ricordi di vecchi pittori." He had access to many documents of this description, which have since been lost.

this enthusiasm was solely excited by a comparative superiority to contemporary art; it has a character of its own, and, once seen, stands out from the crowd of Madonnas, individual and distinct. The type is still the Byzantine, intellectualised perhaps, yet neither beautiful nor graceful, but there is a dignity and a majesty in her mien, and an expression of inward ponderings and sad anticipation rising from her heart to her eyes as they meet yours, which one cannot forget. The child too, blessing with his right hand, is full of the deity, and the first object in the picture, a propriety seldom lost sight of by the elder Christian painters. And the attendant angels, though as like as twins, have much grace and sweetness.*

Cimabue died in 1302,† in the sixty-second year of his age, lamented throughout Italy as the most illustrious painter of his time. His portrait may be seen in one of the great frescoes of Simon di Memmo in the chapel of the Spaniards, the ancient Capitolo of S. Maria Novella. The sculptor Ghiberti, who has left us some interesting notices of the early artists,‡ describes him as a man of most fair presence,

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* This picture still hangs in its original position, in the chapel at the extremity of the Southern transept. It is engraved in Agincourt, *Peinture*, pl. 108, and in Rosini, tav. 4.

† Vasari says in 1300, but he appears to have been executing a mosaic, at Pisa, in 1302, (*Ciampi, Notizie, &c.* p. 144,) and to have left it unfinished through death.—Cimabue painted in fresco at Padua in the church of the Carmelites, afterwards burnt; a head of S. John, cut from the ruin, was preserved in the sixteenth century. See the 'Notizie d'Opere di Disegno,' &c. published by Morelli, *Bassano*, 8vo, 1800, p. 17.

‡ The 'Commentario,' printed by Cicognara at the close of

("di bellissima presenza,") and from the likeness in question it is easy to imagine his appearance—tall, thin and erect in person, with much of the look of a gentleman and of an old soldier, who has been the handsome, the gay, the admired, in his younger days. A commentator on Dante, contemporary with Giotto, describes him as noble in character, but haughty and proud, and one who, if a fault was hinted at in any of his works, or if he discovered a blemish in it himself, would cast it aside at the instant, however deeply interested in it,*—a man, in short, who lived for fame and not for pelf, as all true artists would, were they not compelled too often, by the iron arm of need, to paint to live rather than live to paint. I may add (for everything respecting the man is interesting) that he lived in his own house, afterwards that of Giotto, in the Via del Cocomero, and that he was buried in the adjacent Duomo.

And yet, before bidding farewell to Cimabue, I feel that I ought to apologise to the many writers who reckon him the father of the school of Florence—a dignity which cannot be conceded to him in prejudice of Giotto. The simple state of the case is this:—At a time when the traditions of Byzantium, venerable and noble, but insufficient in themselves for the regeneration of art, ruled paramount in Christendom, Niccola Pisano introduced a new style of design and composition, founded on nature and the an-

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the fourth chapter of the fourth book of his 'Storia della Scultura,' tom. ii, p. 99.

* Quoted by Vasari, in the life of Cimabue.

tique, properly checked by the requirements of Christianity and of the life of the middle ages, retaining nothing from the Byzantines except the traditionary compositions which he held himself free to modify, improve or dispense with altogether at pleasure, with the licence of originality. This new principle was adopted by Giotto, a genius as original as Niccola himself, the sole distinguished pupil of Cimabue, and who struck out a style totally different from his master's and from the Byzantine, which his followers even considered it a demerit to resemble. Cimabue, therefore, exerted comparatively little or no influence on the Florentine school, and the fact (which may readily be allowed) that he improved in design under the influence of the new life imparted to art in general by Niccola Pisano, cannot countervail the certainty that his inward spirit, and even his outward style continued to the last essentially—although in the loftiest sense—Byzantine, and that, if Fra Giacomo da Turrita and Gaddo Gaddi rightly belong to this transitional period, Cimabue must, by all the laws of sound criticism, be classed under it also.—Jupiter, in fact, did not more thoroughly dethrone Saturn than Giotto supplanted Cimabue and the Byzantines —than the Dramatic superseded the Contemplative principle at Florence.

The conquest was not, however, so immediate and complete as in the case of Niccola Pisano in Sculpture. An adherent of the elder school maintained his ground, like a little Emperor of Trebizond, for

many years after Giotto's death, and if I am not mistaken, perpetuated a Semi-Byzantine succession at Florence as late as the close of the fourteenth century.

This was Bonamico di Cristofano, surnamed Buffalmacco, a name better remembered now for eccentricity than genius, yet undeserving of that total neglect to which it is too generally abandoned.

He was educated by Andrea Tafi, the mosaicist—not to his own department of art, but as a painter, and had formed his style and established his fame before the death of Cimabue and maturity of Giotto. His style, so far as we can judge of it by description and the few fragments which remain of his works, was founded on the Byzantine, with such additional improvement as talent and observation enabled him to infuse into it from other quarters. But his caprice and carelessness were at least equal to his genius, and carried away by the perilous gift of facility, he too generally trusted to copious invention, superficial grace and attractive colouring, to atone for inaccurate design, exaggerated action, and the introduction of figures in attitudes more or less comic, admirably calculated to raise a laugh, but utterly at variance with the solemn character of the subjects with which he intermingled them.* On the other hand he knew what was right and fitting, he was even learned in his

* *E. g.*, his representing the mothers biting and scratching in their rage and anguish during the Massacre of the Innocents,—S. Luke blowing his pen to make it give out the ink,—and the old man blowing his nose in the Crucifixion—in each instance as described by Vasari.

art, "dottissimo," according to Ghiberti, "in tutta l' arte," and when he chose to exert himself, when "he put his soul into his work," he excelled, says that writer, "every other painter of his time,"—words to be taken with allowance, but which amply testify the respect accorded to him, even in the days of Cosmo de' Medici.

I confess there is many a celebrated painter, the moiety of whose works I would freely sacrifice to win back from oblivion half a dozen frescoes of Buffalmacco. As it is, we have little to judge him by. Of his numerous works at Pisa, the sole unquestionable one that remains is the Crucifixion in the Campo Santo, an early work, yet a most singular one,—bold and original in composition and by no means ill executed, and especially remarkable for the varied action of the angels with which the sky is peopled; one of them, among a group gathered round Our Saviour, receives the blood from his side in a golden chalice; another, standing on the cross of the penitent thief, extricates his soul from his mouth, while a devil performs the like office for his companion in punishment, receiving it in his arms, and a brother fiend, armed with a whip, bends forward, grotesquely and exultingly, to welcome it to its new existence; the angels who had been watching beside the one cross, fly away, wringing their hands in sorrow, while those attendant on the other rejoice over the good estate of the soul that has found grace even on the stroke of the twelfth hour. All of them are in communion with each other, sympathising with man. Some of

these ideas were adopted and frequently repeated by the Giotteschi and other early painters. The lower part of the composition is filled with warriors on horseback, the Virgin fainting, attended by the Maries, a group of Jews, women, children, &c., all expressive, though often caricatured. The faces are generally rather round and full, a peculiarity which attaches more or less to most Italian painters of Semi-Byzantine descent or sympathies. But this interesting fresco is a mere wreck, scarcely recognisable, it has been so repainted and injured.*—Buffalmacco's later works, at Assisi and elsewhere, have entirely perished,† a fate that some of them had already un-

* The composition has some resemblance to the Crucifixion by Giunta in the upper church of Assisi. It is engraved by Signor Carlo Lasinio, the father, in the magnificent collection of engravings of the Campo Santo, published originally in 1812—primarily, I believe, through the advocacy and interest of Professor Rosini, the historian of Italian art.

† The life of the Magdalen, in one of the chapels of the Lower Church at Assisi, attributed to Buffalmacco, is certainly Giottesque, and appears to be by Giottino.—At Florence, however, in the gallery of the Academy, a picture is attributed to him, which may possibly be his,—at all events it is a very interesting specimen of the school to which he belonged. It was painted and set up, in the year 1312, over the tomb of the Abbess S. Umiltà, (a rich, noble and beautiful damsel of Faenza, foundress of the 'donne di Faenza,' or 'Monache Vallombrosane,' a distinct branch or rule of the Benedictine order,) in the church of her nunnery at Florence, dedicated to S. John the Evangelist, but now destroyed, the name surviving in that of the castle 'di S. Giovanni,' usually known as the 'fortezza di basso,' which extends over the site.—The arrangement of the picture is quite in the Greek style,—the Saint is represented at full length in her nun's dress in the centre, and her story is told in small lateral compartments. In

dergone in Vasari's time, who attributes their decay to his use of a peculiar species of *paonazzo*, or purple,

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the First and highest, beginning from the left, she is seen converting her suitor, a kinsman of the Emperor Frederick II., to the faith of virginity. In the Second is represented the illness of the husband whom her guardians had compelled her to marry, which resulted in his acquiescence in her wish to take the veil, and ultimately, in his assuming the cowl himself, which in the Third compartment he receives from the bishop, while his (late) wife kneels behind, in prayer. In the Fourth is represented the miracle by which the obedience that obtained her name, 'Humility,' (Umiltà,) was honoured by God. Although of high birth, she had never been taught to read; the nuns one day playfully bade her go and read to them as they dined; she bent her head submissively, and went up to the desk, and opening the book, the words presented themselves to her, "Despise not the works of the Lord, for they are all true and just,"—she read them aloud, and then, lifting up her eyes, pronounced a discourse so lofty and thrilling on the text in question, that first they wondered, and presently not an eye remained dry throughout the refectory. And still greater was their surprise when, on examining the book that lay before her, not a word was to be found there of what her mouth had uttered.—The Fifth compartment represents her escape from the convent by the assistance of an angel of the Lord, and her miraculous passage of the river Lamone by walking on the water, her object being to reach the desert and live there in penitence and apart, in imitation of the ancient Anchorets. Being detained, however, shortly afterwards, in an honourable captivity, by a relation who opposed her purpose, she healed by the sign of the cross a young monk whose leg the doctors were about to amputate, and who had besought her interposition, as represented in compartment Sixth, in consequence of which her kinsman relinquished his opposition, and a cell was built for her adjoining the church of S. Apollinare, near Faenza, belonging to the monastery of the youth she had healed, in which she might live, professing the rule of the Benedictines, and furnished with two little windows, the one opening into the church, for the reception of the Sacrament, the other for the introduction of food. She is seen kneeling beside it, in the background of compartment Seventh. Her example induced many other women to build cells round the monastery, and by

mixed with salt, which ate into and corroded them. The ultimate and universal prevalence of the Giot-

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the bishop's desire, confirmed by an apparition of Our Saviour, they were soon afterwards put under her care, and a monastery was built, into which, twelve years after entering her cell, she was formally inducted by the bishop. Some time after this, accompanied by three of her nuns, and at the command of S. John the Evangelist, she walked barefoot to Florence, with the view of establishing another nunnery there; they are seen on their journey in the background of the compartment last mentioned. In the Eighth, the new nunnery is seen in the progress of erection,—she follows a mule laden with stones for the building, which, though past eighty, she daily gathered with her own hands in the Mugnone, the streamlet that flows past Florence, under sunny Fiesole. The Ninth compartment is lost. The Tenth represents her resuscitation of a dead child; it had been entrusted to a poor country-woman to nurse, but fell ill, and she was bringing it to Florence for medical aid, when it died in her arms; she met S. Umiltà, and besought her assistance; a little chapel, dedicated to S. John the Evangelist, stood by; Umiltà took the child and laid it before the image, and making the sign of the cross over the body with a lighted taper, the child revived. Finally, in the Eleventh compartment, is represented the apparition of S. Umiltà, while yet alive, to two nuns who lived as anchorets in the Apennine, but had fallen from their first love, warning them to repent,—and in the Twelfth, her death, aged about a century, in 1310, or rather, the funeral service performed over her remains. See, for this history, the 'Breve Raccolto della Vita, Miracoli e Culto di Sant' Umiltà,' &c. *Flor.* 4to, 1722.—These little compositions are painted on a gold ground and very highly finished; the landscape, trees, architecture, &c., resemble those of the Menologion, and the whole style is Byzantine, but the figures are much superior, and frequently have considerable expression. The colouring tends towards a greyish green, very usual in productions of the Italico-Byzantine schools.—When the monastery of S. John was destroyed in 1529, the picture was removed, along with the body of the saint, to that of S. Salvi, but the latter also being now deserted, it has been lodged, after careful restoration, in the Academy.—I own I am inclined to believe it a genuine work of Buffalmacco, more especially as, according to Vasari, his earliest

tesque taste may have also in many instances doomed them to premature destruction.

In every way, therefore, Time's tooth has been busy with his fame, and a mere skeleton, a very ghost of a reputation is all that remains to Buffalmacco. It is, in truth, in the thin airy atmosphere of the Italian novelists, that his name will survive after every vestige of his works has vanished. From boyhood to hoary age, his pranks and practical jokes were the laugh of Florence, as his conversational flow of fun and humour were the life of Maso del Saggio's shop, the Wits' Coffee-house of the time.* But wit and wisdom are seldom mates, and the ashes left by the crackling thorns of folly press heavily on the head on which retribution lays them. It so fared with Buffalmacco. A merry wag, a careless spendthrift, living for the day without a thought of the morrow, and (as the phrase is) nobody's enemy but his own, he drained the cup of pleasure to the

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employment had been in decorating the church of these 'monache di Faenza' in fresco. It may be noted too that the Mugnone is the scene of one of the best of the practical jokes which Buffalmacco and Bruno played on Calandrino, as related by Boccaccio, and the probability naturally suggests itself that they may, all three, have worked there together. The interest of this picture as one of the very few surviving relics of the early Semi-Byzantine school of Florence—ancestral, as I believe it, to Orcagna and Fra Angelico da Fiesole, with whose works not a few resemblances may be here detected—will excuse the length of this notice.

* The witticisms recorded by Boccaccio are dull enough, the practical jokes excellent,—and so too are those inserted in his Life by Vasari, from the novels of Sacchetti.

lees and found misery at the bottom, dying, at the age of seventy-eight,* a beggar in the Misericordia, without a paul in his pocket to buy a coffin for his corpse or a mass for his soul—the type and mirror of a whole class of artists whose follies and vagaries throw discredit on genius, while a certain kindliness of heart renders it impossible not to pity while we blame them.

One only of his pupils, Giovanni da Ponte, is recorded as such; he was a prodigal and a man of pleasure, and died in wretchedness like himself.† Bruno, the accomplice, and Calandrino, the victim of his practical jokes, as recorded by Boccaccio, both of them painters, though mere daubers, unquestionably belonged to the same school, and, if not his own, may probably have been his fellow-pupils under Andrea Tafi.‡ These would be but ignoble representatives of the Semi-Byzantine succession at Florence; but, strange to say, I think it not improbable that the Orcagna family derive their pedigree as artists from the same original stock,—and that thus the sublime author of the 'Triumph of Death,' and his pupil, the mystic Traini, and even, possibly, the

* In 1340, according to Vasari. But Baldinucci says his name is inserted as alive in 1351, in an ancient book of the Company of the Painters. *Notizie*, &c., tom. ii, p. 27.

† Vasari.

‡ A picture by Bruno, preserved in the Academy of Pisa, is engraved by Rosini, tav. 12. It bears a strong resemblance (in its inferiority) to the style of Orcagna. Compare for instance the female figures with the mother attempting to rescue her daughter from the Demons' grasp in the Last Judgment of the Campo Santo.

half-sainted Beato Angelico da Fiesole, walk in the same procession with him. But these are names of which we shall treat more fully and reverently hereafter.*

There were yet two or three Italico-Byzantine revivals, similar to and contemporary with those of Siena and Florence, which ought to be mentioned, before concluding this letter.

Tomaso de' Stefani effected an improvement of this description at Naples, but the frescoes executed by him in the chapel of the Minutoli in the Duomo are, I fear, no longer visible. Workmen were already whitewashing the upper walls of the chapel when I visited it in the spring of 1842, and it is not likely that the compositions to the right and left of the altar-tomb, which escaped retouching through the intercession of De' Dominici a century ago, have now been spared.† The frescoes, though sadly injured, were well worth preserving; ease, freedom, and even grace made amends for harsh outlines,

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* It may be remarked, that in Ghiberti's 'Commentario' he enumerates the painters in three distinct groups, commencing with Giotto and his pupils, *nominatim*, as such—then proceeding to Buffalmacco, (or, as he calls him, Bonamico,) Pietro Cavallini and Orcagna, evidently considering them a distinct school, independent of Giotto—and lastly, to the painters of Siena.—In the Campo Santo, moreover, the works of Orcagna immediately succeed those of Buffalmacco.

† See the 'Vite de' Pittori, Scultori ed Architetti Napoletani,' by Bernardo de' Dominici, tom. i, p. 11.—I shall speak of the character of this work in treating of the school of Niccola Pisano.

abrupt shadow, and much inequality of execution. But as the work of Tomaso, the brother of Pietro, who sculptured the altar-tomb, and the friend of Masaccio who built the cathedral, each in his department the parent of art at Naples, they should have been held sacred. Tomaso left a pupil, Filippo Tesauro, the master of Messer Simone, whom I shall hereafter mention as a proselyte to the school of Giotto.*

The frescoes of the Baptistery at Parma have a far better chance of preservation, and indeed rank among the most remarkable productions of the thirteenth century. They were executed by Bertolino of Piacenza and Niccolò of Reggio, shortly after 1260, in the youth of Cimabue, and fill three of the concentric circles of the cupola,—the highest representing the Apostles and Evangelists, (three of the latter, S. Mark, S. Luke and S. John being portrayed, like Egyptian deities, with the heads of their respective symbols, the lion, ox and eagle;) the second, Our Saviour, the Virgin and the prophets; the third, the history of S. John the Baptist.† They

* Of Tesauro some frescoes, representing the life of the Beato Niccola, existed at the beginning of last century in a lunette in the chapel of S. Maria del Principio in the church of S. Restituta, now enclosed in the cathedral of S. Gennaro—but they have been whitewashed. *De' Dominici*, tom. i, p. 30.—A Madonna and child, in the Incoronata, over the first altar to the right, on entering the church, struck me as the most pleasing among the various works ascribed to Messer Simone. The expression is very sweet, and the style is peculiar, evidently before any Giottesque influence.

† The series commences in the first compartment to the right

are in excellent preservation, and very nearly as fresh as when first painted. In general style, they are decidedly Byzantine, imitated from the mosaics,—the very colouring, clear and brilliant, reminds one of them; several of the compositions are the traditional ones, yet varied with boldness and originality, while a life and animation pervade the whole series, to which I scarcely remember any contemporary parallel. I cannot say what succession these painters left, but from the peculiar colouring and other circumstances I strongly suspect an ancestral relation between them and the primitive and interesting school of Bologna.*

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of the central, or Western door, as you face it from within, standing at the font. The Second, Sixth and Tenth compartments represent S. Ambrose and S. Augustine, S. Gregory and S. Jerome, S. Martin and S. Sylvester; the remainder are as follows:—1. The Annunciation to Zacharias; 3. The Birth of S. John; 4. An Angel leading him, while a child, into the wilderness; 5. S. John preaching; 7. S. John baptizing; 8. Pointing out Our Saviour to his disciples; 9. Baptizing Our Saviour; 11. Before Herod; 12. Led to prison, while, to the right, his two disciples are seen carrying his message to Christ; 13. Our Saviour performing miracles of mercy in presence of John's disciples, in reply to his message; 14. The two disciples relating to John what they had seen; 15. John's decapitation, and 16. Herod's feast, and the head brought in on a charger.—Some of the frescoes, I may observe, on the lower walls of the Baptistery, though very inferior, are curious as works (apparently) of the earlier pale-colouring school of Northern Italy, after undergoing the influence of the Giotteschi.

* The merits of which must be reserved for discussion hereafter, as the influence of Niccola Pisano became paramount ultimately, even in the case of Vitale, Lippo Dalmasio, and others, whose earlier works belong to the same class as the Madonna of Orsanmichele, and evince a close affinity to the semi-Byzantine style.

In the North of Lombardy we find fewer and indecisive traces of revival—at least in the Byzantine spirit. The old Roman school indeed, or what I have ventured to consider such, revived, especially at Cremona, where some very curious frescoes, of the middle of the fourteenth century, by Polidoro Casella, quite unlike either the Giottesque or the Byzantine manner, still exist on the vaults of the two aisles of the Cathedral.* Such too may be seen at Verona, in the frescoes that line the choir of S. Zenone, but there the Byzantine and Giottesque influences balance, if not encroach upon it.† Guariento, moreover, of Padua, an artist to be mentioned with high praise among the Giotteschi, and even Squarcione, the father of the classic school of Lombardy, would appear to have sprung originally from the same Roman family.

At Venice, on the contrary, ever, as you may remember, sympathetic with the East, a decided, though transient Italico-Byzantine revival took place as late as the middle of the fourteenth century, in the persons of Paolo Veneziano, Niccolò Semite-

* The compositions are chiefly from the patriarchal history. The colouring and drapery are very peculiar, some of the figures are distinguished by a *naïveté* and simplicity which occasionally rises towards dignity, but upon the whole they are inferior, and even below par in point of mechanical excellence. Rosini has engraved two of them, tom. ii, facing p. 147.

† The Baptism of Our Saviour and the Resurrection of Lazarus seem to be the oldest. There is a rather spirited one of S. George killing the dragon, the dragon's tail curling round the horse's leg. These are on the Southern wall of the presbytery.

colo, and Lorenzo, of whom the two former, but especially Niccolò, attempted to infuse the contemporary improvements of central Italy into their distinct traditionary style, while the latter, after a similar effort, abandoned it altogether. Paolo painted the outer case of the Pala d' Oro, in the treasury of S. Mark's, and specimens of the works of Niccolò and Lorenzo may be seen in the interesting museum of the Venetian Academy.*

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* A large altar-piece, in a great number of compartments, of which the central, representing the Coronation of the Virgin, is much superior to the rest, is the most important work of Semitecolo. The only compositions worth notice are that of S. Francis renouncing his father in the market-place at Assisi, the third of the upper row, adapted apparently from a composition by Giotto at Assisi,—and the Last Judgment, in which one of the angels attendant on Our Saviour holds forth a scroll of the sun, moon, stars, &c., as if about to roll it up, while below, to the left, one vast tomb, surrounded by trees, appears to enshrine the spirits of the just, and fire descends as usual from the throne to consume the wicked, to the right of the picture. This is purely a revival, an Italianization of the Byzantine style, and as such the picture is very curious. In the robes of Our Saviour and the Virgin the lights are done in gold, in the *trictrac* manner, so common with the Byzantines. Blue rays, shaped like the blade of a sword, descend from the circlet symbolical of heaven, when the interference of Deity is expressed. Something very like this occurs in the paintings of Tintoretto at Venice and even in the Annunciation by Titian on the staircase of the Confreria di S. Rocco, one of the many reminiscences of Byzantium in his early works. Four other of Niccolò's pictures, one of them signed 'Nicholeto Simetecolo de Venetia,' another dated 1367—and representing S. Sebastian reproving the Emperors Maximian and Diocletian, his being shot at, his martyrdom, beaten to death with clubs, and his burial—are preserved in the Libreria del Duomo, at Padua. The Burial is the best, it is well grouped, the colouring neither very warm nor very pale, the expression tame. They are

It would prolong this sketch unnecessarily to notice the traces of these Semi-Byzantine revivals discoverable long after the direct succession had in each several district failed, and the influence of Niccola Pisano become predominant in Italy—at Siena longer than at Florence, at Bologna longer than at Siena, at Venice longer than at Bologna; while in Western Lombardy, and at Asti, in particular, as late as the pontificate of Leo X., artists might be found, descendants apparently in the direct line from the original Roman school, who perpetuated many of the worst peculiarities of the Byzantine school in the style of the worst contemporaries of the Menologion.*

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highly finished.—Lorenzo is an artist of far higher merit. The earliest of his works would appear to be the immense picture in compartments, formerly in S. Antonio di Castello, now in the Academy at Venice. The Byzantine influence is still visible in it, but in his later works in the same gallery it wholly disappears. His colouring is soft and warm, betraying, if I mistake not, the influence of the early German school of Cologne.—We shall have repeated occasion, hereafter, to notice the influence of Byzantium, long lingering, and perpetually reappearing and asserting itself in the development of art at Venice.

* See for example a picture by Ambrose of Asti, dated 1514, in the Academy of Pisa, and more especially the compositions on the gradino. The picture nevertheless displays points of originality and merit. In the central compartment Mary Magdalen pours the ointment over Our Saviour's head, which I never saw elsewhere, and his conversation with her, (as identified with Mary, the sister of Lazarus,) on the gradino, though rude, is full of feeling. 'S. Orsola, regina di Bretagna' is represented in the compartment to the right, with her Vision, the Voyage of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, and her Martyrdom, on the gradino,—and to the left we behold 'S. Ilaria di Barcalone,'

I should have brought this letter more speedily to a close, had I not wished you to appreciate the Sculpture and Painting of Italy in all their varied relations, nor would the "bright chambers of the East" have revealed Niccola Pisano sooner for my shaking the hour-glass. There is a freshness too in the half-hour's walk immediately before sun-rise, which insensibly begets a brisker step and a more discursive lip than may be maintained in the heat of the day, when the mouth is parched and the foot drags heavily onward. "Absit omen!" but to a pedestrian like yourself this similitude may serve possibly as a Janus-faced apology.

(Barcelona,) a really beautiful figure, with her exposure to the flames, and her decollation, below; a hand, as if from heaven, holds the sword that has despatched her, and her soul flies up to heaven in the shape of a little white bird. The rocks in the background are exactly like those of the Menologion, to which the whole composition bears a singular resemblance. — This picture belongs to a class whose interest, like that of S. Umiltà, is of a documentary description—rude indeed, and of little worth in themselves, but valuable as witnesses in the history of art.

CHRISTIAN ART OF MODERN EUROPE.

PERIOD I.

ARCHITECTURE.

Development of the Christian Element, Spirit—Lombard and Gothic, or Pointed Architecture—Rise of Sculpture and Painting—Expression.

III. NICCOLA PISANO AND HIS SCHOOL—RISE AND RESTORATION OF SCULPTURE, IN CONNEXION WITH GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE — PREPARATION FOR GHIBERTI AND DONATELLO.

SECT. 1. *Pisa—Niccola and Giovanni Pisano.*
SECT. 2. *Florence—Andrea Pisano and Orcagna.*
SECT. 3. *Siena.*
SECT. 4. *Naples.*

LETTER III.

NICCOLA PISANO AND HIS SCHOOL.

RISE AND RESTORATION OF SCULPTURE, IN CONNEXION WITH GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE—PREPARATION FOR GHIBERTI AND DONATELLO.

Section 1. *Pisa—Niccola and Giovanni Pisano.*

In comparing the advent of Niccola Pisano to that of the sun at his rising, I am conscious of no exaggeration; on the contrary, it is the only simile by which I can hope to give you an adequate impression of his brilliancy and power relatively to the age in which he flourished. Those sons of Erebus, the American Indians, fresh from their traditional subterranean world, and gazing for the first time on the gradual dawning of day in the East, could not have been more dazzled, more astounded when the sun actually appeared, than the popes and podestàs, friars and freemasons must have been in the thirteenth century, when from among the Biduinos, Bonannos and Antelamis of the twelfth, Niccola emerged in his glory, sovereign and supreme, a fount of light, diffusing warmth and radiance over Christendom. It might be too much to parallel him in

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actual genius with Dante and Shakspeare; they stand alone and unapproachable, each on his distinct pinnacle of the temple of Christian song,—and yet neither of them can boast such extent and durability of influence, for whatever of highest excellence has been achieved in Sculpture and Painting, not in Italy only but throughout Europe, has been in obedience to the impulse he primarily gave, and in following up the principle which he first struck out.—I write this, fearless of contradiction, for you will not, I am sure, misunderstand me as proposing Niccola's men and women as models for an academy; I think and speak of the immortal spirit, not of bones and muscles,—though even in that point of view he merits no small respect. But to descend to specification:—

Niccola's peculiar praise is this,—that, in practice at least, if not in theory, he first established the principle that the study of nature, corrected by the ideal of the antique, and animated by the spirit of Christianity, personal and social, can alone lead to excellence in art, each of the three elements of human nature — Matter, Mind and Spirit — being thus brought into union and co-operation in the service of God, in due relative harmony and subordination. I cannot over-estimate the importance of this principle; it was on this that, consciously or unconsciously, Niccola himself worked,—it has been by following it that Donatello and Ghiberti, Leonard, Raphael and Michael Angelo have risen to glory. The Sienese school and the Florentine, minds contemplative and

dramatic, are alike beholden to it for whatever success has attended their efforts. Like a treble-stranded rope, it drags after it the triumphal car of Christian Art. But if either of the strands be broken, if either of the three elements be pursued disjointedly from the other two, the result is, in each respective case, grossness, pedantry or weakness,—the exclusive imitation of Nature produces a Caravaggio, a Rubens, a Rembrandt—that of the Antique, a Pellegrino di Tibaldo and a David,—and though there be a native chastity and taste in religion, which restrains those who worship it too abstractedly from Intellect and Sense, from running into such extremes, it cannot at least supply that mechanical apparatus which will enable them to soar,—such devotees must be content to gaze up into heaven, like angels cropt of their wings. I might cite many instances of this,—even Raphael occasionally offends the eye by inaccuracy of design.—The principle, you see, is simple enough; I may recur to it hereafter, when the unconscious accumulation of examples shall have enabled you to appreciate its universal application. We will now proceed to inquire how Niccola Pisano struck it out, and what he has left behind him to justify these observations.

Of the date of Niccola's birth no record, I believe, exists; it probably took place about the beginning of the thirteenth century.* Nor is there any certainty

* This may be gathered from an inscription on the fountain

as to his first instructor in art; it may have been Bonanno, but the discrepancy of age is great between them. His earlier years appear to have been devoted to Architecture,—I have elsewhere estimated his claims to distinction as the introducer of the style usually termed Tuscan or Italian Gothic.

His improvement in Sculpture is attributable, in the first instance, to the study of an ancient sarcophagus, brought from Greece by the ships of Pisa in the eleventh century, and which, after having stood beside the door of the Duomo for many centuries as the tomb of the Countess Beatrice, mother of the celebrated Matilda, has been recently removed to the Campo Santo. The front is sculptured in bas-relief, in two compartments, the one representing Hippolytus rejecting the suit of Phædra, the other his departure for the chace,—such at least is the most plausible interpretation. The sculpture, if not super-excellent, is substantially good, and the benefit derived from it by Niccola is perceptible on the slightest examination of his works. Other remains

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of Perugia, dating between the years 1274, when the fountain was begun, and 1277, when Niccola was dead, and in which inscription he is described as being then in his seventy-fourth year. *Memorie Istor. intorno all' Arca di S. Domenico*, by the *Marchese Virgilio Davia*, 1842, p. 34.—He is designed in the records of Pisa, 'Magister Nichole quondam Petri de Senis Ser Blasii Pisani,'—the son, that is to say, of Peter of Siena, the son of Ser Blasius, or Biagio, of Pisa,—from which Ciampi infers, that his father may have been born at Siena, while his grandfather lived there as Podestà, or in some honourable office, and that neither of these, his progenitors, were artists. *Notizie Inedite*, &c. p. 35.

of antiquity are preserved at Pisa, which he may have also studied, but this was the classic well from which he drew those waters which became wine when poured into the hallowing chalice of Christianity.*—I need scarcely add that the mere presence of such models would have availed little, had not nature endowed him with the quick eye and the intuitive apprehension of genius, together with a purity of taste which taught him how to select, how to modify and how to reinspire the germs of excellence thus presented to him.

His earliest work is probably the Deposition, over the left-hand door of the façade of the Cathedral at Lucca, sculptured in 1233. Several years, apparently, elapsed before he resumed the chisel,† but having once done so, he seems to have worked on, continuously, for a lengthened period, during which he executed the three great works on which his reputation rests,—the pulpits, namely, of the Baptistery at Pisa and of the Cathedral at Siena, and the 'Arca,' or shrine, of S. Domenic, for the church of that Saint at Bologna. The first of these was finished in 1260, as appears by the inscription; the contract for the second was drawn up in 1266,—and, from the date of the translation of S. Domenic's

* The sarcophagus is engraved by the younger Lasinio, in the 'Monumenti Sepolcrali della Toscana,' Flor., folio, 1819, tav. 41.—For illustrations of Niccola's study of the antique, see Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 13 and 15.

† Except the Deposition, and the Arca di S. Domenico, Vasari mentions no sculptures by Niccola, prior to the pulpit of Pisa, but a great number of works in architecture.

remains, there is reason to believe that the intervening years were dedicated to the preparation of the receptacle in which they were to be deposited,* unquestionably the most original and important work that he has bequeathed to us. Each of these monuments is worthy of a minute examination.

The Pulpit of Pisa is perhaps the most elegant in Italy. It is of white marble, six-sided, and supported by seven Corinthian pillars, six corresponding to the angles of the hexagon, and resting alternately on the ground and on the backs of lions, the seventh considerably thicker and in the centre, resting on a whole clump of human figures and monsters. The bas-reliefs are five in number. The first represents the Nativity, the traditional Byzantine composition, very slightly varied; the reclining figure of the Virgin, originally imitated from the ancient statues, but long devoid of grace and beauty, is here restored to not a little of its pristine character; and to show his skill in the delineation of nature, even in the lower grades of animal life, Niccola has introduced, among the attendant sheep, a goat scratching its ear, with admirable effect,—an attempt that he has repeated, with the like success, on the pulpit of Siena.

The second compartment, the Adoration of the Kings, is perhaps the best of the series, admirable in

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* *Davia, Memorie Istoriche*, &c., p. 42; *Rosini, Storia*, &c., tom. i, p. 165.—According to Vasari, the Arca was sculptured in 1225; Count Carlo Malvasia, the historian of Bolognese art, was the first to remark the absurdity of this, S. Domenic having only been canonised in 1234.

composition, calm and quiet, the kings full of majesty, the younger of the three already a little idealised, while the Virgin is the dignified mother of Christ; it was not till afterwards that the idea of virginity prevailed over that of maternity, or rather that artists attempted to blend the two in their delineations of the maiden mother of Nazareth. The three horses also, behind the kings, are full of spirit.

The Presentation in the Temple, and the Crucifixion, (including the Deposition,) follow,—and lastly, the final Judgment—a most remarkable composition, full of attempts, wonderful for the time, to delineate the naked and emulate the antique.

Throughout the series the composition is clear and intelligible, the gesture calm and noble, the expression true and unexaggerated, the drapery dignified and free; and, if a fault is to be found, it is, that the heads are generally somewhat too large in proportion to the bodies, a failing incidental to all early efforts of the kind.

I cannot sufficiently regret the destruction of the gates of Bonanno, for their proximity would have been the surest witness to Niccola's merit. As it is, we may well wonder—to give more appropriate application to an expression Vasari uses with regard to Cimabue—"come in tante tenebre potesse veder Niccola tanto lume." *

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* This pulpit is engraved, as a whole, in Agincourt, *Sculpture*, pl. 32, and the Nativity and the Adoration of the Kings may be seen in plates 14 and 12 of the first volume of Cicognara.

The 'Arca di S. Domenico' is a work of greater extent than the one I have just described,—rich to a degree in general design, yet singularly sober and simple in execution, and altogether a most satisfactory performance.

Its prominent features are the six large bas-reliefs, delineating the principal events in the legend of S. Domenic, disposed, two behind, one at each extremity, and two in front, between which last is fixed a small statue of the Virgin, crowned, and holding the infant Saviour in an attitude which almost every one of his successors has imitated during the following century, none however equalling the original. The face has a sweet expression, though somewhat round and unideal,* but the attitude and drapery are full of grace and elegance. A small statue of Our Saviour occupies the correspondent position at the back of the Arca, and the four Doctors of the Church are sculptured at the angles. The *operculum*, or lid, was added about two hundred years afterwards.

The series of bas-reliefs begins and ends at the back, running round from left to right. The subjects are briefly as follows:—

1. The Papal confirmation of the rule of the Dominican order.—S. Domenic, a Spaniard, of the illustrious Gothic house of Guzman, having formed the scheme of a new religious fraternity, expressly devoted to the defence of the faith against heresy,

* The features seem, as a general rule, to be more full and round in proportion as the Semi-Byzantine influence prevails in European art.

applied to the Pope for his sanction, but unsuccessfully; the following night his Holiness beheld, in a dream, the church of the Lateran giving way, and the Saint propping it with his shoulders; the warning was obvious, and the confirmation was accordingly granted. Each step in the march of this important event is represented in a distinct group in this compartment.

II. The appearance of the Apostles Peter and Paul to S. Domenic, while praying in St. Peter's,—S. Peter presented him with a staff, S. Paul with a book, bidding him go forth and preach to Christendom.—This is a very beautiful composition; attitude, expression, drapery are alike commendable. To the right S. Domenic is seen sending forth the friars preachers ("fratres predicatores") on their mission to mankind.

III. S. Domenic praying for the restoration to life of the young Napoleon, nephew of the Cardinal Stefano, who had been thrown from his horse and killed, as seen in the foreground; his mother kneels behind, joining in the prayer.—The horse is excellent, the figures are singularly free from stiffness and true to nature, some of them even graceful.

IV. S. Domenic's doctrine tested by fire.—After preaching against the Albigenses, he had written out his argument and delivered it to one of his antagonists, who showing it to his companions as they stood round the fire, they determined to submit it to that ordeal; the scroll was thrice thrown in, and thrice leapt out unburnt.

v. The miracle of the loaves.—The brethren, forty in number, assembled one day for dinner, but nothing was producible from the buttery except a single loaf of bread; S. Domenic was dividing it among them, when two beautiful youths entered the refectory with baskets full of loaves which they distributed to the fraternity, and then immediately disappeared.*—The legend is here most happily told; the forty monks are reduced to six, the angels pour the loaves (crossed sacramental wafers) into S. Dominic's lap, who distributes them to his brethren. The composition is extremely simple, the angel youths singularly graceful, and the friars have that peculiar type of countenance which is not merely conventional in art, but may still be seen in every monastery, as if produced in obedience to some law of nature attendant on the profession of celibacy.

vi. and lastly, the Profession of the youthful deacon, Reginald.—He fell suddenly ill when on the eve of entering the order; his life was despaired of; S. Domenic interceded for him with the Virgin, who appeared to him the following night, when on the point of death, accompanied by two lovely maidens, anointed him with a salve of marvellous virtue, accompanying the unction with words of mystery and power, and promised him complete recovery within three days, showing him at the same moment a pattern of the Dominican robe as she willed it to be

* A miracle resembling this is told by Ruffinus of the Abbot Apollonius, *Rosweyde, Vitæ Patrum*, p. 463.

worn thenceforward, varied from the fashion previously in use; three days afterwards, he received it from the Saint's hands, in perfect health, as the Virgin had foretold.—These incidents are represented with singular grace and beauty in this concluding composition.

With the exception of the Adoration of the Kings on the pulpit at Pisa, I know nothing by Niccola Pisano equal to these bas-reliefs. Felicity of composition, truth of expression, ease, dignity and grace of attitude, noble draperies, together with the negative but emphatic merit of perfect propriety, are their prevailing characteristics; while the whole are finished with unsurpassed minuteness and delicacy. And you will recollect too that these compositions are wholly Niccola's own,—he had no traditional types to guide and assist him; the whole is a new coinage, clear and sharp, from the mint of his own genius. Altogether, the 'Arca di S. Domenico' is a marvel of beauty, a shrine of pure and Christian feeling, which you will pilgrimise to with deeper reverence every time you revisit Bologna.*

A much shorter notice will suffice for the last great work of Niccola, the Pulpit of Siena. The subjects are the same as at Pisa, with the substitution of the Flight into Egypt and the Massacre of the Innocents for the Presentation, and the enlargement of the con-

* The bas-reliefs above described are engraved in three large sheets, to accompany the essay of the Marchese V. Davia, above cited. See also Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 8, 9, 10.

cluding composition, the Last Judgment. The Nativity and Adoration of the Kings are little changed; the Massacre and Crucifixion are injured by the caricature of grief, and the same censure may be passed, though in a less degree, on the Judgment, in which the Byzantine traditional composition has been followed so far as space permitted. But the boldness and daring displayed in the naked figures, twisted and contorted into every imaginable attitude, are wonderful, and evince the skill with which Niccola drew at once on the antique and on nature, flinging himself on truth where beauty failed him,—for the Laocoon was still entombed under the ruined baths of Caracalla. The chief fault is the confusion, which is great, and in this respect, if I mistake not, Niccola sins throughout the series. The eye is vexed by the mass of figures and looks away for relief, and this is perhaps the reason why the Caryatides, which front the pillars, please one so much.

I should say that this pulpit betrayed a decadence on the part of Niccola, did it not appear by the contract for its execution that his scholars, Lapo and Arnolfo, and his son Giovanni, were then working under him; to them probably the weaker portions are attributable. The terms of remuneration are curious; Niccola was to have eight *soldi* a-day, his scholars six a-piece, and his son four.*

I have little more to add respecting this wonder-

* See Dellavalle's 'Lettere Sanesi,' tom. i, p. 179.—For engravings of the bas-reliefs see Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 8, 13, 14.

ful man. His latter days were spent in repose at Pisa, but the precise year of his death is uncertain; Vasari fixes it in 1275,—it could not have been much later.* He was buried in the Campo Santo. —Of his personal character we, alas! know nothing; even Shakspeare is less a stranger to us. But that it was noble, simple and consistent, and free from the petty foibles that too frequently beset genius, may be fairly presumed from the works he has left behind him, and from the eloquent silence of tradition.

A word only in conclusion. I have said enough perhaps of Niccola's influence on Art in a general point of view, but I wish to impress it upon you that it was special, direct and peremptory from the very first,—that, in Sculpture, it was felt in the vaults of S. Denis and in the remotest forests of Germany, before the close of the thirteenth century,—and that, in Painting, the schools of Giotto, of Siena and of Bologna, spring immediately from the pulpits of Pisa and Siena, and the Ark of S. Domenic, in distinct

* A paper is extant, dated 10 September, 1277, by which King Charles of Naples grants to the town of Perugia the services of Arnolfo, disciple of Niccola, in order to finish the fountain in the Piazza, abandoned by Giovanni through his sudden journey to Pisa. *Davia, Memorie*, &c., p. 34.—Now Vasari mentions that after completing the fountain (which it seems from the preceding notice was left unfinished), Giovanni departed for Pisa, in order to see his father, who was old and unwell, and that through his delay at Florence, his father in the meantime died. Both King Charles and Vasari evidently speak of the same journey, and this coincidence of testimony may be considered to fix the death of Niccola in 1276, or the beginning of 1277.

streams, like the Ganges, Indus and Brahmaputra from the central peaks of Himalaya.

It is true that the characters of these schools (I allude especially to the Giottesque and Sienese) are different,—that while the Giottesque is Dramatic chiefly, the expression of that Activity of the Imagination which produced the Gothic architecture, the Sienese (including the later but kindred school of Umbria) is Contemplative, the expression of its Repose, sympathetic with the East, and previously developed in Lombard architecture. Nevertheless, both, as schools, originate from Niccola Pisano,—neither could have started on its career without the impulse he gave—to the Dramatic by his historical compositions, to the Contemplative by his Madonna at Bologna, and the individual heads and figures scattered among his works—to both, by that master principle of Christian art which he had thought out and revealed, and within which, in fact, they both lay comprehended, in embryo, like heaven and earth within Brahma's egg.—Not that either line, the Dramatic or Contemplative, was pursued exclusively of the other—not that Giotto and the Florentines did not paint as many Madonnas as the Sienese, nor that the Sienese did not produce a Duccio and a Simon di Memmo, but the current tendencies of the two schools set in respectively to these two poles,—and when either produced an artist of opposite sympathies, and of genius too masculine to compromise its originality, we shall generally find him in alliance with the rival school, and his pupils either dying out

altogether after him, or returning to the banner from which their master had separated himself in the first instance. But this will be more clear hereafter. All I contend for at present is, that every school, contemplative and dramatic, must trace its pedigree to Niccola Pisano in the first instance.

We will now make acquaintance with the pupils of this great patriarch of art.

Three were mentioned a page or two back. Of Lapo nothing certain remains; of Arnolfo, the Gothic ciborium, or tabernacle, at S. Paolo fuori le mura, at Rome, is the most important memorial; but the date recorded on it (1285) being subsequent to that of his settlement as architect at Florence, I fancy it must have been finished by his "famulus," or apprentice, 'Pietro,' whose name is associated with his own in the inscription.* This Pietro is supposed to have been one of the Cosmati family, who have executed several monuments at Rome, in the Pisan style, usually filling the field above the sarcophagus with mosaic-work, for which, as you may remember, they were celebrated, as the heirs of Fra Giacomo da Turrita.

Of Giovanni Pisano, son of Niccola and his heir in reputation, the third, and apparently youngest, of his fellow-workmen on the pulpit of Siena, I will speak anon, after doing justice to a pupil, or at least an imitator, far more able than either Lapo or Ar-

* This tabernacle is engraved in Agincourt, *Sculpture*, pl. 23.

nolfo, and who, I have little doubt, would have surpassed all his contemporaries had the light shone upon him in earlier life. This was Margaritone, mentioned in the preceding letter as painter of the hideous crucifix presented to Farinata degli Uberti between 1260 and 1266. Margaritone had been afterwards employed at Rome by Urban IV. in painting S. Peter's, but he there exchanged the brush for the chisel, on what occasion or after whose example we are not told, although Vasari intimates that his first sculptures were "alla Greca," or in the Byzantine taste,—from which, however, he adds, he purified himself after becoming acquainted with the works of Arnolfo and other sculptors of the Tuscan school. He subsequently settled at his native town, Arezzo, where, on the death of Gregory X, in 1275, he was chosen to sculpture his tomb, still preserved in the Cathedral,—the sole surviving relic of his skill, and a work of such excellence, that, remembering his productions in painting, it would be difficult to credit him with such an offspring, were not the paternity indisputable. The pope slumbers on his sarcophagus, elevated on three pillars,—the whole overshadowed by a Gothic-arched canopy supported by two lateral columns, topped with pinnacles, —the simplest form of a design attributable probably to Niccola Pisano in the first instance, and which, as a generic type, distinguishes all the tombs sculptured by his school—the only material deficiency here being that of the two angels who are usually introduced withdrawing a curtain supposed to have con-

cealed the body.*—The effigy, in the present instance, is excellent, the drapery good; the sculptures on the sarcophagus, representing (in medallions shaped like the vesica piscis) the lamb carrying the cross, between four Apostles, half figures, precisely in the style of the Greek mosaics, at once remind one of Margaritone's original Byzantine prepossessions, and show how completely he had emancipated himself from the rigidity and formalism of his earlier style.† Whether he would have succeeded in composition is a different question, but these heads strike me as freer, more dignified and more graceful than anything I have seen by the far more celebrated

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* The general type was still preserved during the Second or Cinquecento period of Italian sculpture, the pointed of course being exchanged for the round-headed or classic arch. Singularly enough, the arrangement of the sarcophagus, effigy, &c. in these later monuments strikingly resembles that in the tombs of Palmyra, in the most ancient and best preserved of which, that (namely) of Manaius, erected A. D. 103, his statue (now destroyed) lay in a reclining posture, at the extremity of the tomb between two pillars half-embedded in the wall; these pillars supporting a sarcophagus covered with an embroidered cushion, on which the figure was represented a second time stretched out as a corpse—thus portraying him both in life and death, exactly as in the grand Gothic tombs, presently to be mentioned, at Naples. These identical results from common principles are very curious, and instances equally startling might be cited; at Petra, for instance, the broken pediments, intermediate urns, and general corrupt style of Bernini and Boromini, are anticipated in the excavations named *El Khasne* and *El Deir*,—the latter, especially, might be mistaken for a work of the seventeenth century. See the prints in Count Léon de Laborde's work on Arabia Petræa.

† This tomb is engraved in the 'Monumenti Sepolcrali della Toscana,' tav. 39.

Giovanni Pisano—to whom we must now do homage with that deference which the respectable heir of an Alfred or a Charlemagne is rightfully entitled to as his successor.

Giovanni was, in truth, a man of far inferior genius to his father. His *forte* lay in invention, but it was copious rather than select, and in investing his ideas with forms, he was too apt to borrow them in the first instance from the pulpits of Pisa and Siena, and reissue them, starved and emaciated, as if from a beleaguered city. He profited little by the antique, either in form or spirit, and Nature shrank from his embrace. He is often sadly deficient in taste and propriety; his figures are not seldom ignoble in form and feature, and uncertain in action, and in compositions on a large scale fall into inextricable confusion. The wand, in short, which, waved by the father, commands the services of superior agencies, few in number, who work his will with calmness and dignity, brings up for the son a crowd of inferior spirits, who do indeed what he bids them, but grumblingly, and with a jostling and bustle utterly devoid of dignity.—Nevertheless there are exceptions to these censures, and when he fairly takes pains, he acquits himself well; if he cannot breathe in the rare and lofty atmosphere where his father disports himself, he comes gracefully enough down on parting company with him, like an aeronaut with his parachute. I do not indeed think that Giovanni ever did himself justice; he needed the stimulus of competition; it was not merely the *prestige* of his father's

fame,—there was literally no one to run against him; he walked the course, and still, I think, enjoys a reputation superior to his merits, like certain beauties of last century, whose portraits clearly prove that their vaunted charms were relative merely to the general plainness of their contemporaries. Considered as an architect, indeed, he merits far higher praise.

His earliest work in Sculpture was the fountain of Perugia, begun by himself and completed by Arnolfo,—a beautiful and graceful structure, and covered with allegorical figures, much injured but of great merit, and in the design of which he is supposed to have been assisted by Niccola.* Returning to Pisa, on his father's death, he was received with pride by his fellow-citizens, and appointed architect of the Campo Santo, which was built after his designs between the years 1278 and 1283. After this he visited Naples at the invitation of Charles I., of Anjou, to build a castle and a church, but the following year, leaving their prosecution to the care of the architect Masaccio, he returned, through Siena, to Tuscany, and settled for a time at Arezzo, where he sculptured the marble shrine of S. Donato for the Cathedral, a work exceeding the 'Arca di S. Domenico' in magnificence, but far below it in every other quality. The composition, indeed, of the bas-reliefs is often good, but the execution is very rude, even

* See Davia's 'Memorie,' &c., p. 38.—An interesting work descriptive of this fountain has been published by Signor Vermiglioli, the biographer of Perugino and Pinturicchio.

in those portions which can with least likelihood be imputed to his assistants.* He sins even against propriety in the Death of the Virgin, (one of the larger compartments,) where S. John is represented puffing at his censer, which is about to go out, with distended cheeks, and in an attitude worthy of Buffalmacco or Bassano.

This shrine of S. Donato is by many considered Giovanni's finest work, but I cannot give it the preference to the bas-reliefs on the *facciata* of the Duomo at Orvieto, by many ascribed to his father, though erroneously so, as is evident from their comparative imperfection in design, from the frequent emaciation of the figures, and from an almost uniform deficiency of that grace which plays like a breeze of spring round his father's steps. Yet they have high merit of another sort; the tale of creation and of the loss of Eden, with its first-fruits, the fratricide of Cain, is ably told and well contrasted with the Judgment, in which the Byzantine composition reappears in all its essential details; the naked figures are sometimes extremely good, but grief and passion are sadly caricatured, and the Satan is contemptible. The happiest innovation (anticipated indeed in the mosaics of Venice) is the introduction of two angels attendant on Our Lord throughout the work of Creation and his subsequent intercourse with

* Several of these, according to Vasari, were Germans, who worked under him rather for instruction than gain, and who were afterwards employed at Orvieto, and in S. Peter's at Rome, under Pope Boniface VIII.

man; their floating attitude may have suggested to Ghiberti his exquisite amplification of this idea on the 'Gate of Paradise,' the portal of the Baptistery of Florence.*

The remaining sculptures of the *facciata* are admittedly the work of Goro, Agostino and Agnolo, and other of Giovanni's Sienese pupils; they are not of transcendant merit.

Giovanni had returned to Tuscany before 1297, with the object, it is said, of examining the works of architecture and painting with which Arnolfo and Giotto were then decorating Florence. He does not however appear to have worked there. His last

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* That these bas-reliefs are by Niccola Pisano is against all probability, as he died before September, 1277, and the cathedral was not commenced till 1290. On the other hand, they are much superior to the adjacent sculptures by Goro, Agostino, and Agnolo, and Giovanni was the only sculptor, then living, capable of executing them; we may safely therefore pronounce them his,—while, that they were early works, would appear from the consideration that the style of the pulpit at Pistoja, which occupied him from 1297 to 1301, is much inferior, and that between the completion of the shrine at Arezzo and the commencement of the said pulpit, a space of time intervenes, unoccupied by any extant or recorded work, and which might well have been devoted to the execution of the bas-reliefs in question,—in confirmation of which, Vasari, although attributing them to Niccola, intimates a visit of Giovanni to Orvieto shortly after his residence at Arezzo. We may conclude, therefore, that they were begun in, or shortly after, 1290, nearly at the same moment with the cathedral they were intended to adorn. Possibly Niccola's designs may have been followed by Giovanni; his spirit, at all events, presided over his son's chisel. They have been engraved, although inaccurately, in the folio atlas accompanying the history of the Duomo by Dellavalle. See also Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 17.

great works were the pulpit of the Cathedral at Pistoja, finished in 1301 after four years' labour, and that of the Cathedral at Pisa, now taken to pieces; both of them are inferior to his earlier efforts, alike in originality and execution. The latter, begun in 1302 and finished in 1311, was suspended for a year or two, on the death of Pope Benedict XI., in 1304, when he was chosen to execute his mausoleum for the church of S. Domenico, at Perugia,—a work in which he was much more successful.*—Giovanni died in a good old age, but in what year is uncertain; Vasari says in 1320, but he elsewhere contradicts himself. He was buried in his father's tomb in the Campo Santo, under the arcades himself had reared, according to a graceful usage which has ever since obtained in Italy, of burying the children of art in the principal scenes of their genius and their fame.

After Giovanni's death the Pisan school split into two principal branches, that of Florence, which held an undisputed pre-eminence till the death of Orcagna, and that of Siena, originally far inferior, but which took the lead during the latter years of the fourteenth century, and only yielded it to Ghiberti and Donatello at the beginning of the fifteenth. The Neapolitan school must also be reckoned as a branch of the Pisan, tracing its origin to Giovanni, and possibly even higher; it is interesting from its isolation,

* This tomb is engraved in Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 21.—It stands in the north transept.

and from its partial descent from the German architects who flourished at Naples in the thirteenth century. I shall speak of each of these three branches in succession, merely premising that of the less distinguished pupils of Giovanni the only one worth mentioning (and for his good fortune rather than his merit) was Giovanni di Balduccio, of Pisa. He was invited to Milan by the Signor, Azzo Visconti, and spent many years in his service, and a specimen of his talents may be seen in the shrine of S. Peter Martyr in the church of S. Eustorgio, executed in 1333 and the six following years, and in which the legend of the Saint is represented in a series of bas-reliefs, very rude indeed but life-like, and in some of the allegorical figures not undeserving of praise.* The succession of this sculptor seems to have endured for several generations in Western Lombardy, and the magnificent tomb of Can-Signore della Scala, at Verona, is a witness to their merit, although it be of an architectural rather than sculptural character, the bas-reliefs being very inferior, when closely inspected.†

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* See Agincourt, *Sculpture*, pl. 34. The story begins at the back of the shrine with the preaching of the saint in the piazza of Milan, his visiting the sick and giving speech to the dumb, and is continued through his martyrdom, and the translation of his body, to his funeral ceremony, and his appearance in succour to mariners in a storm, the two latter subjects being represented in front.

† The sculptor of this tomb was Boninus à Compigliono, or Da Campione, one of a whole family of *scarpellini*, stone-cutters or carvers, mechanics rather than artists, like those of Fiesole, yet evidently men of taste if not of genius, and who

SECTION 2. *Florence—Andrea Pisano and Orcagna.*

WE now enter upon a new period in the history of Italian sculpture, correspondent with the lives of Andrea Pisano, the ablest scholar of Giovanni, and of the one great pupil of Andrea, the still more celebrated Orcagna.

Hitherto, you may have observed, neither Giovanni nor Niccola had been employed at Florence, while every neighbouring city had been vieing for their services. Political hostility would only partially account for such apathy, but one's surprise ceases on recollecting that Florence was the last of the three Tuscan republics to take the lead in politics, and that she was only commencing her grand works of architecture when Pisa and Siena were completing theirs. Once, however, entered on the field of art, she cultivated it with an industry and talent which made speedy and ample amends, to herself and Italy, for former neglect. At the period of which I speak, Arnolfo had been for several years in her employ as public architect, and at his death in 1300, S. Maria del Fiore, the new Cathedral, was considerably advanced towards completion. Giotto, a young man, but already the acknowledged prince of painting, and of a genius which qualified him to excel

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had flourished in the Milanese, on the district from which they derived their name, between the lakes of Como and Lugano, since the close of the twelfth century. See Cicognara, tom. i, pp. 371, 221, &c.

indifferently in either of the three sister arts, and thoroughly to appreciate the relation they bear to each other, was appointed to design the façade in the richest Gothic magnificence—pinnacle and niche, statue and bas-relief; his drawings were approved of, but sculptors being scarce at Florence, and no one appearing capable of suitably executing them in marble, Andrea, already favourably known by some figures at Pisa, was summoned for the purpose, then in the thirty-first year of his age. He set to work immediately on the façade, and his first productions, the statues of Boniface VIII. between S. Peter and S. Paul, and some prophets, gave so much satisfaction that he seems to have been indefinitely engaged as sculptor-general to the city, to execute whatever works of importance might thenceforward be needed in his peculiar walk of art. From this time he adopted Florence as his country, and dwelt there for the remainder of his days, the object of universal respect and admiration.

Andrea's merit was indeed very great; his works, compared with those of Giovanni and Niccola Pisano, exhibit a progress in design, grace, composition and mechanical execution, at first sight unaccountable—a chasm yawns between them, deep and broad, over which the younger artist seems to have leapt at a bound,—the stream that sank into the earth at Pisa emerges a river at Florence. The solution of the mystery lies in the peculiar plasticity of Andrea's genius, and the ascendancy acquired over it by Giotto, although a younger man, from the first mo-

ment they came into contact. Giotto had learnt from the works of Niccola the grand principle of Christian art, imperfectly apprehended by Giovanni and his other pupils, and by following up which he had in the natural course of things improved upon his prototype. He now repaid to Sculpture, in the person of Andrea, the sum of improvement in which he stood her debtor in that of Niccola,—so far, that is to say, as the treasury of Andrea's mind was capable of taking it in, for it would be an error to suppose that Andrea profited by Giotto in the same independent manner or degree that Giotto profited by Niccola; Andrea's was not a mind of strong individuality; he became completely Giottesque in thought and style, and as Giotto and he continued intimate friends through life, the impression never wore off,—most fortunate, indeed, that it was so, for the welfare of Sculpture in general, and for that of the buildings in decorating which the friends worked in concert, to wit, the Duomo and its dependencies, to which, after this necessary digression, I now return.

After finishing the prophets, Andrea sculptured various other statues for the façade, but how shall I tell you that this façade, so rich, so beautiful, exists no longer?—It was taken down towards the close of the fourteenth century, when two-thirds finished, to be replaced by another more magnificent, but which was demolished, in its turn, in the sixteenth, to be renewed no more except by the flat, meaningless, blank wall, that repels the eye at present. Of the component parts of Andrea's original structure, the

greater portion has long been destroyed; some of the statues (whether by a happier or less enviable doom) lie scattered in holes and corners throughout Florence, and the four Doctors of the Church, in particular, may still be seen at the foot of the ascent to Poggio Imperiale, metamorphosed into poets, and christened Homer, Virgil, Dante and Petrarch.*

Happily, Andrea's most important work, the bronze door of the Baptistery, still exists, and with every prospect of preservation. It is adorned with bas-reliefs from the history of S. John, with allegorical figures of virtues and heads of prophets, all most beautiful,—the historical compositions distinguished by simplicity and purity of feeling and design, the allegorical virtues perhaps still more expressive, and full of poetry in their symbols and attitudes; the whole series is executed with a delicacy of workmanship till then unknown in bronze, a precision yet softness of touch resembling that of a skilful performer on the piano-forte. Andrea was occupied upon it for nine years, from 1330 to 1339, and when finished, fixed in its place, and exposed to view, the public enthusiasm exceeded all bounds; the Signoria, with unexampled condescension, visited it in state, accompanied by the ambassadors of Naples and Sicily, and bestowed on the fortunate artist the honour and privilege of citizenship, seldom accorded to foreigners unless of lofty rank or exalted merit. The

* See Förster's 'Beiträge,' &c., p. 152.—The prospect is held forth this year (1845) of a restoration of the façade in the spirit of the fourteenth century.

door remained in its original position—facing the Cathedral—till superseded in that post of honour by the 'Gate of Paradise,' cast by Ghiberti. It was then transferred to the Southern entrance of the Baptistery, facing the Misericordia.*

While occupied on this great work, Andrea found time to carve, in white marble, the tabernacle, or ciborium, for the interior of the building; it was destroyed about a century ago, and replaced by the tawdry accumulation of cloud and tinsel that disgraces the spot at present. A fragment or two serve now as balustrades to the altar of the little chapel of S. Ansano, below Fiesole, having been removed thither by the late antiquarian Canon Bandini, along with many other ejected sculptures and paintings of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Lastly, Andrea sculptured the greater number of the bas-reliefs which range round the basement of the Campanile,—admirably executed, but of which, as the composition of Giotto, I shall postpone speaking to a future moment. Whether the three statues niched higher up in the Campanile, facing the South, were also after Giotto's design, I cannot say.

From this extreme point of Andrea's career we may glance back to the door of the Baptistery with a fairer chance than we could otherwise expect of forming a reasonable opinion on the disputed point, whether the design of its bas-reliefs be his own or

* The bas-reliefs of this door have been engraved most beautifully by the younger Lasinio, in the thin folio entitled 'Le tre porte del Battistero di S. Giovanni di Firenze,' 1821.

Giotto's. On the one hand Vasari asserts that Giotto had made a "bellissimo disegno" for the door, and a still older authority, the biographer of Brunellesco, who wrote about 1471, refers to his having done so as an admitted fact, and still more specifically, speaking of the "quadri delle porte che v' erano, di bronzo, che v' è la storia del Santo Giovanni, che si feciono per maestri forestieri nel secolo passato, benchè 'l disegno delle figure, che si feciono di cera, fusse di Giotto dipintore:" * On the other, Vasari's own testimony to Andrea's fertility of invention, as himself possessing a series of illustrations by his hand of the whole book of the Apocalypse,—and the supposed indignity that Andrea must have felt in executing the designs of another artist, are urged in favour of their originality—arguments, of which the latter is nullified by the indisputable fact that two out of his three great works he did so execute, while the former, if allowed its full value, merely proves him a most accomplished imitator, the compositions in question being thoroughly Giottesque,—for, in truth, his genius had taken the hue of Giotto's more completely than ever chamelion took that of the leaf he fed upon. I cannot therefore think such presumptive pleading entitled to be heard against the positive testimony of Vasari and his predecessor.

Andrea's plasticity extended, I fear, from his

* Printed at the close of Baldinucci's life of Brunellesco, ed. Flor., 1812, p. 149.

genius to his moral character. It is painful to find the guest of Florence, who had not merely enjoyed the love of her citizens but been inscribed among their number and promoted to the highest offices of the state, lending himself, at the close of his life, to the schemes of her tyrant, Walter de Brienne, Duke of Athens, and fortifying the public palace and the walls of the city against her liberties.* He survived the Duke's expulsion two years, dying in 1345, in his seventy-sixth year.

Andrea Pisano left two sons, both of them sculptors, but one only worthy of mention—Nino, surnamed, like his father, Pisano, but who, having been his assistant through life, has left few original works. The most remarkable are in the little chapel of the Spina at Pisa,—three statues, of the Virgin and child, attended to the right and left by S. Peter and S. Paul, (in one of whom he has represented his father Andrea, whose face seems to have been disfigured by an enormous wen,) and a bas-relief of the Virgin suckling the infant Jesus, very coarse and vulgar, but remarkable for a delicacy and waxen smoothness of workmanship unequalled in his age except by his fellow-pupil—so often mentioned already, and to be noticed more specially hereafter, under his highest character, as a painter—the illustrious Orcagna,—whose tabernacle in the Orsanmichele may be reckoned, with the gate of S. Giovanni

* The duke would not employ Taddeo Gaddi, being a native Florentine. *Vasari.*—The contrast is not much in Andrea's favour.

and the shrine of S. Domenico, as the third among the precious relics of the Pisan school.

During the early half of the fourteenth century, the Madonna, painted by Ugolino of Siena, and attached to a pilaster in the loggia of Orsanmichele, as mentioned in the preceding letter, had acquired the character of a miraculous image,—crowds resorted to it for devotion, and it was determined to convert the loggia into a chapel by filling up the arches with a continuous wall. This was done under the superintendance of Taddeo Gaddi, and a Company, or association, was at the same time formed in honour of the Madonna of Orsanmichele,—it speedily rose into the highest veneration for charity and benevolence. At this juncture, the great plague of 1348 rolled down on Italy,—Florence suffered fearfully; citizens without number, pest-stricken themselves, after seeing their whole families die before them, bequeathed their all to the Company for distribution to the poor in honour of the Virgin; the offerings of gratitude, after the plague had ceased, were also considerable, and the total sum thus accumulated was found, on final computation, to amount to more than three hundred thousand florins. The captains of the Company resolved to expend a portion of this treasure in erecting a tabernacle or shrine for the picture to which it had been offered, and which should exceed all others in magnificence. They entrusted the execution to Orcagna, who completed it in 1359, after ten years' labour, having sculptured all the basreliefs and figures himself, while the mere archi-

tectural details and accessories were executed with equal care by subordinate artists, under his own eye and direction.*

And there it stands!—lost, indeed, in that chapel-like church, from which one longs to transport it to the choir of some vast cathedral—but fresh in virgin beauty after five centuries, the jewel of Italy, complete and perfect in every way—for it will reward the minutest examination. It stands isolated—the history of the Virgin is represented in nine bas-reliefs, two adorning each face of the basement, and the ninth, much larger, covering the back of the tabernacle, immediately behind the Madonna; one of the three Theological Virtues is interposed between each couple of bas-reliefs, on the Western, Northern, and Southern faces respectively, the corresponding space at the East end, immediately below the large bas-relief, being occupied by a small door:—while, laterally, in the angles of each several pier that supports the roof, five small figures are sculptured, a Cardinal Virtue, in each instance, occupying the centre, attended, to the right and left, by a virtue of sister significance, and by two apostles, holding scrolls of prophecy or gospel—each series of five having reference apparently to the peculiar merits exemplified by the Virgin at the successive periods of her history, as commemorated in the bas-reliefs,—the series of these bas-reliefs beginning with her birth,

* See Vasari and Baldinucci, in their respective lives of Orcagna.

on the North side of the basement, and running round from left to right. I may mention her Marriage and the Adoration of the Kings as peculiarly beautiful, and among the single figures those of Obedience, Justice, and Virginity.*

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* The following list of the subjects may be found useful in examination :—

North Face of the Basement.

1. The Birth of the Virgin,—S. Anna stretches her hand from the bed, and feebly caresses the new-born babe, which the nurse has just swathed up :—

2. Faith, crowned, and holding the cup :—

3. The dedication of the Virgin,—her young, expectant companions looking at her with curiosity, as she ascends the steps of the temple :—

Angles of the N. W. pier.

4. An Apostle :—

5. Obedience,—her hand raised, half opened, her head bowed in compliance :—

6. Justice,—a beautiful figure, the countenance very noble, crowned, with her veil tightly bound round her brows and under her chin, forming a most graceful head-dress,—holding the sword in her right hand and the balance in her left :—

7. Devotion, pressing her hand on her bosom :—

8. An Apostle or Prophet,—pointing towards the following compartment, with an appropriate motto from S. Luke :—

West Face of the Basement.

9. The Marriage of the Virgin,—the High Priest joining their hands, S. Joseph holding his rod, with the dove resting on the flower,—behind him a suitor breaking his own,—much grace in the Virgin's figure and dignity in S. Joseph and the Priest :—

10. Hope,—seated, her hands uplifted in expectation :—

11. The Annunciation,—the Angel good, the Virgin not quite successful :—

The character of these sculptures is that of dignity tempered by sweetness to a singular degree, and

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Angles of the S. W. pier.

12. An Apostle :—

13. Patience :—

14. Fortitude,—holding the column and a shield marked with the cross.

15. Perseverance,—with a wreath of olive, the left arm concealed in her mantle :—

16. An Apostle :—

South Face of the Basement.

17. Birth of Our Saviour,—the old traditional composition :—

18. Charity,—with her crown and vase of flames, and a child on her knee, to which she gives the breast :—

19. The Adoration of the Kings,—graceful and beautiful, the composition quite simple, admirably executed, and with much feeling :—

Angles of the S.E. pier.

20. An Apostle :—

21. Humility,—looking down :—

22. Temperance,—with her compasses :—

23. Virginity,—a sweet, graceful figure, pressing her hand on her bosom :—

24. An Apostle :—

East Face of the Basement.

25. The Purification,—simple and noble; engraved in Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 22, and described at p. 462 :—

26. Above the small door a beautiful figure of an Apostle, pointing upwards to the large bas-relief :—

27. Gabriel presenting the palm-branch to the Virgin, in token of her approaching decease,—the Virgin is of middle rather than extreme old age; some of the legendaries assert that she died within a year after Our Saviour :—

Angles of the S. W. pier.

28. An Apostle :—

29. Docility,—an elderly woman, holding an emblem, now broken, in her two hands :—

mingled with a peculiar contemplative, abstractive expression, especially in the female figures, as decidedly akin to that of the Sienese and Semi-Byzantine schools of painting as the works of Andrea Pisano are to the Giottesque. If Ugolino's Madonna was to be enshrined in marble, Orcagna was assuredly the sole artist fitted for the task—and were it not that he stood without a rival in the art when selected for the purpose, I should have imputed that selection to the same occult sympathy which will almost invariably be found the rule of patronage in

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30. Prudence,—double-faced and crowned, holding a snake in her left hand, the fingers of her right muffled up in her robe:—

31. Caution,—with her finger on her mouth:—

32. An Apostle:—

Centre of the back of the Tabernacle.

33, 34. The Death and Assumption of the Virgin, in two compartments; in the lower, the body lies on the bed, and Our Saviour appears on the further side with the soul in his arms; the Apostles are gathered round it, dignified and expressive figures, though the grief is a little caricatured,—in the upper, she is carried up to heaven by angels, seated in her throne and within the vesica piscis. Below is inscribed the name of the artist, "Andreas Cionis Pictor Florentinus," with the date 1359.

Besides these, many other little statues are niched and pinnacled throughout the pile. And, finally, crowning the whole, the statue of S. Michael the Archangel, with his drawn sword in his right hand and the globe in his left, attended to the right and left (if I mistake not) by Gabriel and Raphael, armed, with shields, and looking south and north. The outer rails too are of marble, with twisted columns, and surmounted by angels carrying tapers,—the columns resembling those in the tomb of Niccola Acciajuoli, presently to be mentioned, at the Certosa.

Italian art. To the above characteristics truth of feeling, ease of attitude, and breadth and dignity of drapery may be added, though in design Orcagna is certainly inferior to Andrea. The influence of the antique is, however, more visible here than in his paintings.

Nor is his mastery over the whole mechanism of the art, as exhibited in this extraordinary shrine, less praiseworthy; the general adjustment and the *commettitura*, or piecing of the different parts, is wonderful; he used no cement, but bound and knit the whole together with clamps of metal, and it has stood firm and solid as a rock ever since.—In point of architecture too, the design is exquisite, unrivalled in grace and proportion,—it is a miracle of loveliness, and though clustered all over with pillars and pinnacles, inlaid with the richest marbles, lapis-lazuli, and mosaic-work, it is chaste in its luxuriance as an Arctic iceberg—worthy of her who was spotless among women.—We cannot wonder, considering the labour and the value of the materials employed on this tabernacle,* that it should have cost eighty-six thousand of the gold florins treasured up in the Orsanmichele—or hesitate in agreeing with Vasari, that the eighty-six thousand florins could not have been better spent.

I am not aware of any other works of Orcagna in marble. The tomb of Niccola Acciajuoli, Grand-

* Engravings of this tabernacle were published a few years ago by the celebrated Lasinio.

Seneschal of Naples, and a most interesting character, in the Certosa near Florence, is ascribed to him, but is probably by some of his pupils, as well as the three other monumental effigies of the family there preserved.* None however of these pupils distinguished themselves,† and after Andrea's death, which was before 1375, Sculpture languished at Florence, at least in the hands of Florentines, till the close of the century.‡

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* The general design of Niccola's tomb is very peculiar, Gothic certainly, but (like the Loggia de' Lanzi) almost transitional to the Cinquecento. It is engraved in the 'Monumenti Sepolcrali della Toscana,' tav. 35.—Niccola, the Grand Seneschal and the founder of the convent, was a noble character; some of his letters are printed in the first volume of Dr. Gaye's 'Carteggio inedito degli Artisti.'[a]—The family, originally from Brescia, and named after the trade they rose by, attained sovereignty in the person of Ranier, nephew of the Seneschal, styled Duke of Athens and Lord of Thebes, Argos and Sparta. He was succeeded by his bastard son Antony, and the latter by two nephews, whom he invited from Florence, Ranier and Antony Acciajuoli; the son of the latter, Francesco, finally yielded Athens to Mahomet II, in 1456, and was soon afterwards strangled by his orders at Thebes.

† The sculptures on the Loggia de' Lanzi, representing Faith, Hope and Charity, were executed, not by Orcagna but by Jacopo di Piero, probably his pupil, as appears from documents cited by Baldinucci, *Notizie*, &c. tom. ii, p. 142, ed. Manni.

‡ Fiesole became at an early period the head-quarters of a school of *scarpellini*, or stone-cutters, who scarcely aspired to the dignity of Sculpture, although they frequently showed great

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[a] A most valuable collection of original documents—letters of artists, extracts from public records, &c., published by Molini at Florence, in 3 vols. 8vo., 1839. Dr. Gaye, a Dane by birth, and a most ardent and indefatigable student of early Italian art, died prematurely at Florence in 1840. See a very interesting review of the 'Carteggio' in the Foreign Quarterly, No. 68, Jan. 1845.

SECTION 3. *Siena.*

THE Sienese branch of the Pisan school was founded by the brothers Agostino and Agnolo, to whose ex-

taste; their mechanical skill in working marble was highly celebrated; they were constantly employed by the great Tuscan sculptors in executing the inferior portions of their works. Andrea da Fiesole, who sculptured, in 1412, the tomb of Bartolommeo Saliceti, in S. Domenico at Bologna, was the most celebrated of the race, prior to Andrea Ferrucci and others, whose works belong to the Cinquecento.

'Cesellatura,' or goldsmiths' work, is one of those numerous departments of art, which I have refrained from noticing except when they supply illustrations in which the more noble branches are deficient. It deserves indeed a history to itself, and its importance may be estimated by the fact, that numberless artists of the highest celebrity—from Orcagna to Cellini—spent their early years in apprenticeship to the goldsmiths, chasing chalices and tabernacles for altars and churches. It was, moreover, in experimenting in his craft, that the goldsmith Maso Finiguerra discovered the art of engraving. The silver 'Cassa,' or shrine, of S. James, in the cathedral at Pistoja, executed chiefly by Florentine goldsmiths during the fourteenth century, and that of S. Giovanni, belonging to the Baptistery of Florence, but preserved and shown at the 'Opera of the Duomo,'[a] are the most interesting works of this class, belonging to the period we are at present reviewing. The latter was begun in 1366, but not finished till 1477, when payments were made to Bernardo di Bartolommeo Cenni, to Andrea del Verrocchio, and to Antonio di Jacopo del Pollajuolo, for its completion; the records of the

[a] The building, temporary at first, but which frequently became permanent, attached to every cathedral during the process of erection, for the accommodation of the Operajo, or chief architect, &c., and which seems to have been an expansion of the original simple wooden loggia, or lodge, of the freemasons. Being generally of considerable size, and of little use subsequent to the completion of the several cathedrals, they were often employed for occasional purposes, and it would be interesting to know whether the musical drama, commonly called the Opera, acquired its name from having been originally performed in them.

cellence as architects I have elsewhere paid my tribute of admiration. They were placed under Giovanni Pisano in 1284, during a short sojourn of that sculptor at Siena on his return from Naples, and worked under him on the shrine of S. Donato at Arezzo, and afterwards at Orvieto, and on the pulpits of Pistoja and Pisa as his pupils and assistants, Agostino, especially, distinguished himself by such superiority to his fellow-students as to acquire the name of the 'right eye' of his master. After parting from Giovanni, they settled at Siena as public architects, in which capacity they were fully occupied for many years. They reappear as sculptors in 1327. Giotto, passing through Orvieto that year on his way to Naples, was pleased with their performances, and recommended them to the brother of the recently deceased chief of the Tuscan Ghibellines, Guido Tarlati, Signor and Bishop of Arezzo, to sculpture his tomb. They executed this important work in three years, completing it in 1330. You will see it in the Cathedral there. It exceeds in magnificence every previous monument of the age, and yet dis-

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Duomo probably contain much more information respecting the artists previously employed,—the names, as given by Gori in his account of the Baptistery, printed in 1756, and now affixed on slips of pasteboard to the respective bas-reliefs, are quite untrustworthy. The bas-reliefs seem to have been very carelessly put together, as respects chronological succession. The Reproval of Herod by S. John is one of the most striking compartments; his figure is full of dignity and beauty. The silver statue of S. John in the centre, dated 1452, is by Antonio del Pollajuolo, according to Vasari; the figure is very skinny, but fine.

appoints one,—it wants relief; the proportions of the Pisan type, so harmonious and so graceful, are quite lost sight of; the sarcophagus and recumbent effigy, and the attendant angels drawing back the curtain, are diminished into insignificance in order to give prominence to a series of bas-reliefs delineating the principal events of the bishop's life; perhaps you may find compensation in them for the defects I complain of, and which are certainly architectural rather than sculptural; the composition is often very good, though the execution is rude. Vasari ascribes the design of this monument to Giotto, but it is surely very unworthy of him.*

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* This monument is engraved in the 'Monumenti Sepolcrali della Toscana,' tav. 40.—The subjects of the bas-reliefs are as follow:—1. Guido's installation as Bishop; 2. His election as Lord of Arezzo, in 1321; 3. An allegory of the oppressions then prevalent at Arezzo, and which his election was intended to relieve; 4. The justice executed by him on the part of Arezzo against her oppressors; 5. The rebuilding of the walls of the town; 6. The reduction and capture of Lucignano; 7. The capture of Chiusi; 8. Of Fronzola; 9. Of Castel Focognano: 10. Of Rondine; 11. Of Bucine; 12. Of Castello di Caprese; 13. Of Laterina; 14. Of Monte Sansovino; 15. The Coronation of the Emperor Louis, of Bavaria, Guido being one of the three excommunicated bishops who performed it,—and, 16. The death of Guido in 1329.—Tarlati and his ancestors, an obscure but powerful race, of Teutonic origin and inflexibly Ghibelline principles, had been lords of Pietramala, the dreariest spot in the Apennine, since the tenth century; his brother Saccone succeeded him,—in spirit a Lombard of the days of Alboin, scorning the soft civilization of Italy, and aspiring to be king over mountain and forest, but as wily as he was bold, daring and determined; he ruled over the whole of the central Apennine for many years till death surprised him in 1356, in his ninety-seventh year. Perceiving the consternation of his attendants—

Agostino and Agnolo died about 1344, leaving many pupils, native and foreign. Of the latter, Lanfrani of Vicenza and the brothers Jacobello and Pietro Paolo of Venice were the most distinguished. Of Lanfrani the elegant tomb of Taddeo Pepoli, governor of Bologna, in the church of S. Domenico, in that city,* is the most remarkable production; while the 'Arca,' or shrine, of S. Augustine at Pavia,† is attributed by the best critics to the brothers of Venice, and without a shadow of doubt belongs to the Sienese branch of the Pisan school. It is rather heavy perhaps, but not the less a most elaborate and beautiful piece of architectural sculpture. The sarcophagus, on which the effigy is laid down by angels, the canopy that overshadows it, the pillars that support the canopy, each and all are covered with bas-reliefs, delineating the life and miracles of the Saint, and interspersed with small statues of Apostles and Virtues ingeniously allegorised. These single figures struck me as superior to the bas-reliefs, although even in them there are many pleasing figures; the soft con-

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everything hanging on his personal character and energy—he despatched his son, Marco, to capture a neighbouring castle, thinking that the news that he was dying would have lulled the vigilance of his enemies, and that a blow struck at such a moment would confirm his son's authority; the enterprise failed and he expired, lamenting that fortune, hitherto so favourable, had turned her back upon him,—her flight was absolute; his family were immediately stript of their territories and sank back into obscurity, and this monument is the sole surviving memorial of the brief hour of their greatness.

* It is in the chapel 'del Rosario.'

† In the South transept of the Duomo.

templative Sienese expression prevails throughout, and some of the figures have even grace and dignity.

This Arca was begun in 1362, and must have taken several years to execute. Its style of sculpture is certainly much superior to the undoubted works of Jacobello and Pietro Paolo at Venice, of which the most remarkable are the statues of Our Saviour, the Virgin, and the Apostles on the screen of the choir of S. Mark's, dated 1394. The sculpturesque posterity of these brothers flourished in the North of Italy, and especially at Venice, for nearly a century; the churches there are full of their productions, and if it interest you to make acquaintance with the last decrepid degenerate descendant of this transplanted race, you may do so in the person of Vellano, author of the bronze bas-reliefs in the choir of S. Antonio at Padua, dated as late as 1488, but in merit below the worst productions of the preceding century.

Returning to Siena, the sculptor Goro, author of the 'Urn of S. Cerbone,' in the Cathedral of Massa, dated as early as 1323,* and of other works much later in the century, is the only name worth remembrance; and I may pass from him without injustice to Niccolò Aretino and Giacomo della Quercia, sculptors of far higher deserts and reputation, who held during the last quarter of the fifteenth century that undisputed pre-eminence in their art to which no claimant had appeared in Tuscany since the death of Orcagna.

* I have not seen this urn; it is described by Dellavalle, *Lettere Sanesi*, tom. ii, p. 128.

Niccolò, after executing, in 1383, the Madonna della Misericordia, on the façade of that institution at Arezzo,—a composition in which the Virgin appears, sheltering the natives, rich and poor, under her robe, and which he has invested with much dignity of mien and expression*—settled at Florence, where indeed he had originally studied, though under a Sienese sculptor, of no great reputation, by name Moccio. He worked for many years there; an Evangelist seated, an excellent statue, now in the Duomo,† and two little figures of marble above Ghiberti's statue of S. Matthew at the Orsanmichele, are his principal works. They bear much resemblance to the style of Andrea Pisano, and during these latter years he may almost be termed an adopted Florentine.‡

Giacomo, on the contrary, with all the merits of the Florentine branch, retains the unmistakeable characteristics of his native Siena—grace and simplicity, and that peculiar sweetness of expression which I have noticed as distinguishing the school. The work which established his reputation was an equestrian statue, larger than life, of the Sienese general, Giovanni d'Azzo Ubaldini, carried in procession at his funeral on a lofty pyramidal scaffold, and the first of the kind ever made,—it has long since perished; the horse was most ingeniously fabricated with pieces of wood,

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* Engraved by Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 18.

† See Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 32.

‡ Niccolò died in 1417, aged 67.

jointed together and coated with plaster. He executed it at the age of nineteen, in the year 1390.* He was next employed on the Fonte Gaja, on which he worked, at intervals, for many years, and from which he derived the surname by which he was usually known, of 'Giacomo della Fonte.' He also sculptured some prophets on the façade of the Duomo. At Lucca, in S. Frediano, he sculptured the tomb of Ilaria, wife of Paolo Guinigi, a work of much elegance and simplicity, representing on the basement genii, or children, supporting wreaths of fruit, so strongly resembling those of Donatello, that it is difficult not to suspect a relationship of art between them. He is also supposed to be the author of the Assumption of the Virgin, over the Northern door of the Duomo at Florence, commonly called the 'Mandorla,' from the almond, or vesica piscis, which surrounds her. In 1430 and the four following years he executed the bas-reliefs around the door of S. Petronio at Bologna, and, during occasional visits to his native city, two at least of the three bronze bas-reliefs which ornament the font in the Baptistery. In 1435 he returned to Siena, on being appointed Operajo, or Director of the works at the Duomo, an office of high dignity and emolument, in which he spent the last three years of his life, dying in 1438, worn out with labour, at the age of sixty-seven,

* It was probably constructed on the same principle as the celebrated horse of Donatello, now in the immense hall of the Palazzo della Ragione, at Padua.

lamented by the whole city, for his noble personal qualities no less than his professional ability.*

Giacomo della Quercia was the last, strictly speaking, of the Sienese branch of the Pisan school. The stars of Ghiberti and Donatello were in the ascendant during the last thirty years of his life, but he cannot be reckoned as their pupil, for, although he undoubtedly benefited by their influence, they too had profited by his, in earlier years, and we cannot doubt that he had contributed to prepare the way for their appearance. I ought to have mentioned before this, that both Niccolò Aretino and himself had unsuccessfully competed with Ghiberti at the memorable *concorso* for the gate of S. Giovanni, in 1403.†

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* See the *Lettere Sanesi*, tom. ii, pp. 146 sqq., and Gaye's *Carteggio Inedito*, &c., tom. i, pp. 135, 365.

† Among Giacomo's disciples were Niccolò, surnamed 'dell' Arca,' from having added the *operculum*, or cover, to the Arca di S. Domenico, at Bologna, and Matteo Civitali, whose works are to be seen at Lucca, both of them decidedly artists of the Cinquecento. Vecchietta, author of the bronze tabernacle of the high altar in the Duomo at Siena, was also his pupil, retaining more of the elder manner than the preceding artists,—while in Neroccio, whose graceful statue of S. Ansano (a Fra Angelico in stone) may be seen in the chapel of S. John the Baptist in the same cathedral, the spirit of the earlier days of art still most pleasingly predominates. The designs of Antonio di Federigo, too, for the pavement of the Duomo, would appear to associate him with Neroccio and Giacomo, in contradistinction to the prevailing tendency of art at Siena towards the middle of the fifteenth century. Antonio was a sculptor, and I believe some of his statues still exist at Siena.*

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* Were it not that Ferri's Guide to Siena names Neroccio—a sculptor of whom I know nothing—as author of the S. Ansano, I should have attributed it to Antonio.

SECTION 4.—*Naples.*

I HAVE only now to sketch, and with a rapid pencil, the fortunes of the Neapolitan branch of the Pisan school.

Masuccio the elder, or the First, as he is styled *more regio* by the Neapolitans, is universally reckoned its founder. He was educated by an aged artist of the Semi-Byzantine succession, who practised the three arts conjointly, and is said to have been the sculptor of the miraculous crucifix preserved in S. Donfenico Maggiore, which spoke to S. Thomas Aquinas.* Losing his guidance at the period when he most required it, Masuccio applied to a German architect, then resident at Naples, who proved a most kind friend, communicating to him all his own knowledge, and afterwards taking him with him to Rome, where he devoted himself to the study of the monuments of architecture and sculpture there preserved.

Pietro de' Stefani, brother of Tomaso, the reviver of painting at Naples, had in the meanwhile been pursuing a course of diligent self-instruction in sculpture, forming his taste on two statues of Castor and Pollux, and some other fragments of the antique then preserved there.

Neither Pietro nor Masuccio, however, would

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* The words are thus reported, "Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma! quam mercedem accipies?" To which S. Thomas answered, "Non aliam nisi te, Domine!"

appear to have particularly distinguished themselves previous to Giovanni Pisano's visit to Naples in 1283, invited thither by Charles I. of Anjou, to build the Castel Nuovo and the Franciscan church of S. Maria Nuova. Masuccio, hearing of this, returned to Naples in hopes of obtaining notice and employment from the King. Giovanni being anxious to return to Tuscany, and having already considerably advanced the castle and the church, Masuccio offered his assistance to superintend their completion, which Giovanni, after making trial of his abilities, accepted, and so went home. Thus introduced to the King, Masuccio rapidly rose to eminence. A cathedral was the next edifice contemplated by Charles; he drew the plan of one, which pleased the King so much that he commissioned him to erect it, and when ready for internal decoration, employed at his recommendation the brothers de' Stefani to sculpture and paint it, Masuccio confining himself thenceforward to the profession of architecture. The tribune, or Gothic altar, of the Minutoli chapel, with the crucifix and the attendant figures of the Virgin and S. John, sculptured by Pietro on this occasion, sufficiently shew that he had become a faithful adherent to the Pisan school.

A tender friendship subsisted between these three artists, which was cemented by the virtual adoption of the son of Pietro by Masuccio, who held him at the font, gave him his own name, and devoted his latter days to his instruction in the sister arts. Masuccio died in 1306, aged seventy-seven, universally

lamented, and his friend Pietro and his younger namesake and protégé sculptured his tomb. Pietro and Tomaso, then very aged, continued working for five years afterwards, ever sorrowing for his loss, and then they too sank into the grave, aged about eighty, nearly at the same moment.—These details, and others I am about to give you, are from the Lives of Bernardo de' Dominici, the Vasari of Naples, and I must warn you not to give them too implicit credence; at the same time his account of these early artists is so pleasing, that, with due caution, we cannot refuse to listen to it, and may be permitted to hope that more may be true than rigid criticism would allow. So far, at least, as the works of these artists may be received as vouchers to their personal character, that testimony is amply in favour of his veracity, and probably the narrative, though suspiciously circumstantial and certainly often incorrect, contains not a little traditional truth.*

To Pietro de' Stefani, or possibly to the elder

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* The work is entitled, 'Vite de' Pittori, Scultori ed Architetti Napoletani,' *Naples*, 3 vols. 4to, 1742. It is extremely scarce, and but for the kindness of friends both in Italy and England, I should have been unable to refer to it. The first volume of a reprint appeared in 1840; I know not whether any more have been issued. The work is a storehouse of information respecting the Neapolitan artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and many citations are also given *verbatim* from the MS. collections of the painters Giovanni Angelo Criscuolo, Massimo Stanzioni, and others, respecting the history of art at Naples. The reprint alluded to is quite void of notes, which are greatly needed in consequence of the many changes that have taken place since De' Dominici flourished.

Masuccio, I am inclined to attribute the very curious sculptures of the pulpit at S. Chiara, and the bas-reliefs now attached to the gallery overhanging the Western entrance, and representing the history of S. Catherine of Alexandria,—both series apparently earlier in date than the church. The latter especially are well worth examination. Extremely rude in point of execution, they tell their story with simplicity and feeling, and if a proof were wanting what a mine artists unheedingly possess in such neglected relics of early art, it would be supplied here by the example of the illustrious Florentine, Masaccio, who seems to have borrowed from them the composition of more than one of his beautiful frescoes in S. Clemente at Rome.* There are fountains of all sorts,

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* The subjects of these bas-reliefs are as follows:—1. The Death and Testament of King Costus, father of S. Catherine; 2. The Hermit delivering to her the tablet or image of Christ and the Virgin; 3. Her marriage to Our Saviour; 4. Her expostulation with the Emperor; 5. Our Saviour's appearance to her in prison, promising her protection in the approaching dispute; 6. Concealed, but without doubt, her Dispute with the Doctors; 7. The Martyrdom of the Doctors; 8. The visit of Queen Faustina to S. Catherine in prison, and the flagellation of the latter.—she seems at least to be leaning forward to receive blows; 9. A repetition of her scourging; 10. Her exposure to the wheels, and rescue by the angel; 11. Her decapitation—her soul carried away by an angel.—My reason for thinking that Masaccio has studied these basreliefs, is grounded on the resemblance that exists between No. 8 and the corresponding compartment in the series at S. Clemente,—with this peculiarity, that Masaccio seems to have mistaken her attitude and the employment of the executioner,—here her head is not off, at Rome he has represented it so, before her actual decease. This misconception explains what is very puzzling in the fresco. In numbers 10 and

and some of the sweetest draughts I ever quaffed have been from wells dug in the desert, filled with sand and withered leaves when I approached them, but in which, when cleared out, the water rose fresh and sparkling in the sun.—Traces of Byzantine influence are also visible in these compositions, mingled, though faintly, with that of the Pisan school. If by Pietro, they were probably executed in his youth.

Masuccio, in the meanwhile, the Second of that name, had been cultivating a talent which was destined not only to place him at the head of the artists of his own country, but to give him an honourable name among those of Italy at large. He had long suppressed an anxious desire to study at Rome, in consideration of the age and affection of his father and uncle; their death left him at liberty to follow his inclinations; he proceeded thither, and spent three years in assiduous study, both of architecture and sculpture, probably, (it may be conjectured) under the Cosmati, who had been instructed by Arnolfo, pupil of Niccola Pisano.

At this period, 1309, Robert, surnamed the Wise, the patron, in after life, of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, succeeded to the crown of Naples. Proposing to erect a magnificent church in honour of the Corpus Christi, and informed of the talent of the young Masuccio, he sent him orders to return home immediately. But Masuccio, being then occupied with an important work on which he had been employed by

11, especially the last, the composition is almost identical with Masaccio's.

a Cardinal, the nephew of the reigning Pope, would not abandon it in this hasty manner, and requested the King's permission to delay his return till he should have fulfilled his engagement, promising to do his utmost to please him afterwards. Robert, offended at his non-compliance, applied to a foreign architect, then resident at Naples; he undertook the work, produced a model, and, with the eloquence of his words, built up (says De' Dominici) before the eyes of the King and Queen the most stately church in the world; the commission was given him; the first stone was laid with great pomp, and the church was commenced forthwith.

But before it had risen many feet from the ground, reports spread through Naples, and reached Masuccio at Rome, that the foundations were insufficient, and that the architect was a mere adventurer, utterly ignorant of the profession. By this time the Cardinal's church was nearly completed, and Masuccio, representing the urgency of the occasion, readily obtained his permission to return to Naples. He went immediately to examine the new edifice, and found his arrival so opportune, that much that had been misdone might still be rectified. He demanded an audience of the King, and told him frankly his opinion, explaining the reasons on which he grounded it; the King sent for the architect, heard in the presence of both parties what each had to say, and the result of the conference was the betrayal of the vaunting ignorance of the one artist and of the superior skill of the other, the dismissal of the foreigner

and the instalment of Masuccio in his place.* The building in Masuccio's hands soon assumed another aspect, and after completion received the honour of decoration in fresco from the hand of Giotto. Masuccio afterwards built a convent contiguous to it, at the command of Queen Sancia, for nuns of the Franciscan order of S. Chiara, by whose name the church is now known.

But it is as a sculptor that Masuccio descends with most honour to posterity,—though S. Chiara be a stately pile, the tombs that he has left in it are its chief attraction, those, namely, of King Robert and of his only son, Charles the Illustrious, Duke of Calabria, who died in his father's life-time, in 1328, in the flower of his age. The young Prince, robed in his royal mantle, *semée* with fleur-de-lys, and crowned, lies recumbent on his sarcophagus, which is unveiled by two angels; a basrelief on the front represents him sitting in state, receiving the homage of the barons and the ministers of the kingdom, while his feet rest on a wolf and a lamb drinking at the same fountain, emblematical of the peace and security resulting from his justice. The sarcophagus rests on columns, supported by lions and faced by Caryatides. The whole is recessed, in the usual Pisan manner, within a lofty Gothic arch. This tomb stands to the right of the high altar, as you face it.—That of King Robert was planned by Masuccio in the life-time of the monarch, who proposed

* This story has a suspicious resemblance to a well known incident in the life of Michael Angelo.

the tribune erected by Pietro in the Minutoli chapel as his model, wishing it to serve alike as a monument for himself and an ornament to the high altar. On presenting his design, the King was much pleased, but thought it too magnificent for a man (as he accounted himself) of little merit in the sight of God; it was laid aside therefore, nor was it till many years after the King's death that Masuccio executed it, at the command of his grand-daughter, the unhappy Joanna. It rises, in Gothic glory, to the height of perhaps thirty or forty feet, but is unfortunately so concealed by the gaudy modern altar that it is seen with difficulty. The King, like his son on the adjacent monument, is represented both in life and death,—sitting on his throne in his royal robes, and stretched on his sarcophagus in the habit of the Franciscans, which he assumed eighteen days before his death—angels unveiling it, and revealing him to the gaze of the people. It would require pages to enumerate and particularise the Apostles, Saints and various emblematical personages that adorn this noble sepulchre; the attitudes are generally simple and natural, the expression is dignified and noble, and although I would not parallel it in excellence of execution with the works of the contemporary Tuscans, it is in no wise inferior to them in spirit, and nowhere can the Pisan type of sepulchral architectural sculpture be seen in such magnificence.*

The other tombs attributed to Masuccio in S.

* The tomb of the Duke of Calabria is engraved in Cicognara, tom. i, tav. 40.

Chiara, are of inferior merit; one of them, at least, that of the Queen Joanna, is not by his own hand, but was sculptured by his pupils after his designs. Masuccio was strongly attached to that ill-fated princess, and a devout believer in her innocence, and after her murder at Muro in the Basilicate, in a church dedicated to S. Francis, which he (Masuccio) had built for her, and on which he was still employed when the catastrophe occurred, he sculptured her tomb secretly, under pretence of working ornaments for the church, and afterwards, with the assistance of some of her partisans, removed her body thither from Naples, effecting the translation so quietly that it has become a disputed point where her remains actually repose.

I need not enumerate the remaining works of Masuccio, executed in architecture and sculpture during a long and busy life-time. He died, according to De' Dominici, towards the close of the century, in his ninety-third year, of a violent fever, which his frame, weakened by so many years' incessant labour, was unable to resist,—full of honour, wealthy and lamented by every one, having never missed an opportunity of doing a kindness, and having displayed, through a long life,—all the virtues that adorn, without apparently one of the vices that so often sully, the career of genius.

He left several pupils, of whom the most distinguished were Bamboccio, (who sculptured the door of S. Giovanni Vangelista, and inserted under the tribune of Pietro de' Stefani, in the Minutoli chapel,

the tomb of the Archbishop Filippo, of that family,*) and Andrea Ciccione, his worthy successor on the throne of Neapolitan architecture and sculpture, and not less distinguished for his virtues and piety. His most important works are the Gothic tombs of Ladislaus of Hungary, King of Naples, and of the celebrated Ser Gianni Caracciolo, both at S. Giovanni a Carbonara. The former was erected on the death of Ladislaus in 1414, by command of his sister and successor, Joanna II, who is represented

* The scene of a ludicrous story told by Boccaccio. The night after the Archbishop was buried, one Andreuccio, a countryman of Perugia, who had come to Naples to buy horses, and had been tricked out of his purse by a Sicilian courtezan who pretended to be his sister, fell, after two or three intervening misadventures, into the company of a couple of miscreants, who, needing a confederate, persuaded him to join in an attempt to possess themselves of a ruby ring, valued at fifty gold florins, which had been buried with him. They came to the chapel at midnight; the two robbers lifted and propped up the lid of the sarcophagus, and then frightened Andreuccio into entering it and stripping the body. Andreuccio, however, secreted the ring, and pretended that he could not find it. Persisting in his story, and feigning to continue a fruitless search, they lost patience, dropped the lid upon him, and went their way, leaving him stretched, half dead with fright, on the Archbishop's body. Presently, however, another party of plunderers arrived with the same object, guided by a priest, who after lifting and propping up the lid as before, stepped boldly into the sarcophagus. Andreuccio (personating the dead Archbishop) caught him by the leg, pulling him downwards; the priest yelled out in an agony of horror, and freeing himself with a violent effort, rushed out of the church, with his accomplices at his heels, as if a legion of devils were in pursuit,—while Andreuccio quietly walked out after them, with the ring in his pocket, and quitting Naples the following morning, made the best of his way back to Perugia. *Decam. Giorn.* ii, nov. v.

seated beside him under the lofty arch that supports the sarcophagus, on which he reappears, but stretched out in death. Four large Caryatides, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Magnanimity, support this immense structure, which is crowned by the equestrian statue of the monarch, armed cap-a-piè, and holding his drawn sword. It is a grand conception, but the execution is of unequal merit, and the same may be said of the tomb of Caracciolo, the favourite of Queen Joanna, which adorns the extremity of the tribune or choir, behind the high altar.*

Ciccione died in 1455, and in him this Neapolitan branch of the Pisan school may be considered extinct, his pupil Agnolo Aniello Fiore, (son of the painter Colantonio,) having transferred his allegiance to the Majani, sculptors of the new Tuscan school, long resident at Naples, and whose influence, through Agnolo, may be seen in the *chef d'œuvre* of the celebrated Giovanni di Nola, pupil of the latter, the tomb of Don Pedro de Toledo in S. Giovanni degli Spagnuoli.

Travellers are usually little aware of the sepulchral wealth of Naples; her churches are literally crammed with sculptures and monuments, works of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which are always worthy of attention. And, probably from the suc-

* An adjacent chapel, added to the church in later times, is full of interesting, though comparatively modern monuments of that ancient and distinguished family, which claims descent from Tancred de Hauteville, and one of whose daughters gave birth to S. Thomas Aquinas.

cessive and reiterated influence of the Normans, French and Spaniards, more of the old chivalric and Gothic feeling may be found among them than elsewhere in Italy, save in a few districts comparatively remote from republican influence, where a tincture of the ancient spirit has survived and mingled with the Cinquecento.*

I have thus traced the different lines of the Pisan school, as founded by Niccola and Giovanni, and subsequently developed in the distinct branches of Florence, Siena and Naples, to the period when the influence of Ghiberti and Donatello became predominant throughout Italy. But I wish you to observe, that I by no means identify these last most admirable artists with the tide of corruption which set in during their life-time, or, to speak more plainly, with the new Cinquecento Architecture ori-

* I may cite the monumental effigy in S. Cyriaco, at Ancona, of the good knight Francesco Cognomento, who died there, an exile from his native Fermo, in 1530,—and that, more especially, of Guidarello Guidarelli, now preserved in the Academy at Ravenna, a work apparently of the latter half of the fifteenth century. He reposes on his bed of stone, in full armour, stretched on his back, his sword between his legs, its cross-hilt resting on his breast, and his arms crossed over it; the visor is up, the head falls to one side; the features are a little sunk, but full of fortitude, courage and dignity. And the workmanship is as beautiful as the spirit is elevated and pure. According to Ribuffi's Guide to Ravenna, it is the work of Giacomello Baldini, a native of the town, but neither Füssli nor Nagler, nor such of the historians of Ravenna as I have consulted, mention such an artist.

ginated by their contemporary, Brunellesco. On the contrary, I look upon them as the legitimate heirs of Niccola Pisano, as those who carried Christian sculpture to its perfection in adhesion to his principles, and in intimate alliance with that symbolical Gothic architecture, which, though in a less perfect form, he had naturalised in Italy. It is as the ruling spirits of a new era, as the parents of two distinct lines of succession, both in Sculpture and Painting, by whom the great battle of Christianity and resuscitated Paganism was waged in European Art during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, that I place them at the head of the Second great period or division in its history.

CHRISTIAN ART OF MODERN EUROPE.

PERIOD I.

ARCHITECTURE.

Development of the Christian Element, Spirit—Lombard and Gothic, or Pointed Architecture—Rise of Sculpture and Painting—Expression.

IV. GIOTTO AND HIS SCHOOL—RISE AND RESTORATION OF PAINTING, IN CONNEXION WITH GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE—DRAMATIC—PREPARATION FOR MASACCIO.

PART I. GIOTTO.

SECT. 1. First Period.—*Early works at Rome and Florence.*
SECT. 2. Second Period.—*His First Visit to Lombardy.*
SECT. 3. Third Period.—*His works at Assisi.*
SECT. 4. Fourth Period.—*His works at Florence, in the North of Italy, at Avignon, and Naples.*
SECT. 5. Fifth and closing Period.—*His latest works at Florence.*

PART II. THE GIOTTESCHI.

SECT. 1. *Pupils of Giotto.—Proselytes from pre-existent Schools—Immediate disciples.*
SECT. 2. *School of Taddeo Gaddi; principal branch at Florence, descended through Giov. da Milano.*
SECT. 3. *School of Taddeo Gaddi; inferior branch, Florence and Tuscany, through Giac. da Casentino.*
SECT. 4. *School of Taddeo Gaddi, in Lombardy.*
SECT. 5. *Giotteschi of Umbria.*

LETTER IV.

GIOTTO AND HIS SCHOOL.

RISE AND RESTORATION OF PAINTING, IN CONNEXION WITH GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE—DRAMATIC—PREPARATION FOR MASACCIO.

We must now return to the close of the thirteenth century, and trace the history of Painting, as developed contemporaneously with her sister, Sculpture, and (like her) under the shadow of the Gothic Architecture, by Giotto and his successors throughout Italy, by Mino, Duccio, and their scholars at Siena, by Orcagna and Fra Angelico da Fiesole at Florence, and by the obscure but interesting primitive school of Bologna, during the fourteenth and the early years of the fifteenth century,—a period closed, as in the case of the Pisan school of sculpture, by the interposition of a new influence, potent and decisive for good and evil, in the sculptures of Ghiberti and Donatello, to whose works the Painting of the fifteenth and following century stands indebted in the same manner and degree as that of the thirteenth and fourteenth to those of Niccola Pisano. But the two periods can be paralleled only in their com-

mencement; they are essentially distinct in their development; the one is as the age of youth, the other of opening manhood,—this may be compared to the peace of paradise, that to the turmoil that succeeded the Fall; then, we shall have to contemplate the warfare of antagonist principles and that disruption of the unity of art which ensued on the dethronement of Gothic architecture and the schismatic arrayment of sculptors and painters under the opposite banners of Christianity and Paganism,—it was a churning of the ocean, out of which Painting indeed emerged at last in consummate loveliness, and with the cup of the waters of immortality; but the period we have now to deal with is one, comparatively speaking, of repose and tranquillity, — the storm sleeps and the winds are still, the currents set in one direction, and we may sail from isle to isle over a sunny sea, dallying with the time, secure of a cloudless sky and of the greetings of innocence and love wheresoever the breeze may waft us. There is in truth a holy purity, an innocent naiveté, a child-like grace and simplicity, a freshness, a fearlessness, an utter freedom from affectation, a yearning after all things truthful, lovely and of good report, in the productions of this early time, which invest them with a charm peculiar in its kind, and which few even of the most perfect works of the maturer era can boast of,—and hence the risk and danger (which I thus warn you of at the outset) of becoming too passionately attached to them, of losing the power of discrimination, of admiring and imitating their de-

fects as well as their beauties, of running into affectation in seeking after simplicity and into exaggeration in our efforts to be in earnest,—in a word, of forgetting that in art, as in human nature, it is the balance, harmony, and coequal development of Sense, Intellect and Spirit, which constitutes perfection.

But I shall recur to this hereafter. Giotto is to be our theme at present—a man of vast genius, second only to Niccola Pisano among the regenerators of art, and in a large sense fairly to be accounted the father of Painting in Italy. It is true that Mino and Duccio had formed their style before and independently of him, although, like himself, from the works of Niccola, and that therefore the Sienese school has, strictly speaking, a claim to precedence. But as a general principle, power must be acquired in the gross before it can be distributed in detail; the progressive or dramatic principle must necessarily take the lead before the contemplative can do itself justice. Hence it is to Giotto that his contemporaries and the generations that immediately succeeded unanimously ascribe the revival of the art;* his scholars established themselves in every

* "Avendo egli quella arte ritornata in luce." *Boccaccio, Decam.* Giorn. vi, Nov. 5.—"Il quale Giotto rimutò l' arte del dipingere di Greco in Latino, e ridusse al moderno; ed ebbe l'arte più compiuta che avesse mai più nessuno." *Cennino Cennini, Trattato della Pittura,* p. 3.—"Cominciò l'arte della Pittura a sormontare in Etruria in una villa...la quale si chiamava Vespignano. Nacque uno fanciullo ... Fecesi Giotto grande...arrecò l'arte nuova, lasciò la rozzezza de' Greci...Fu inventore e trovatore di tanta dottrina, la quale era stata sepolta

quarter of Italy during his life-time; his influence was felt in all the pre-existent schools, the greater number of which adopted his style at once, while the few, of sturdier independence, yielded him proselytes, and all more or less profited by being his contemporary; the Sienese school was no exception to this rule,—I think myself justified therefore in postponing it to that of Giotto, and I do this with the less scruple, as the temporary neglect will enable me to render it ampler justice in the sequel, and the relative arrangement will also enable us better to appreciate the works of Orcagna and Fra Angelico, who stand apart from and yet in intimate relation with both one and the other.

I shall accordingly devote the present letter to Giotto and the Giotteschi, treating, in the First part or division, of the life and works of the patriarch of the school, and in the Second, of his pupils at Florence and in other parts of Italy, till superseded by the various new styles of the fifteenth century.

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circa d'anni 600." *Ghiberti, Commentario, &c. ap. Cicognara*, tom. ii, p. 99.—"Ille ego sum, per quem pictura extincta revixit." *Epitaph by Politian.*—"Che. . il disegno. . mediante lui ritornasse del tutto in vita." . . "Essendo egli stato quello che ritrovò il vero modo di dipingere." . . "Giotto nacque per dar luce alla pittura." . . "Non solo pareggiò il fanciullo la maniera del maestro suo, ma divenne così buon imitatore della natura che sbandì affatto quella goffa maniera Greca, e risuscitò la moderna e buona arte della pittura." *Vasari.*

PART I.—GIOTTO.

We may divide this First part into five distinct sections, treating of as many distinct periods in the career of Giotto—the First, comprehending his youth and early works at Rome and Florence; the Second, his first visit to Lombardy, in or about 1306; the Third, his works at Assisi; the Fourth, those produced during a prolonged residence at Florence, in the North of Italy, and at Avignon and Naples,—and the Fifth, those that occupied the last four or five years of his life at Florence, when he figured as architect and sculptor as well as painter. I think you will find this a convenient and not an arbitrary arrangement.

SECTION 1. *First Period—Early Works at Rome and Florence.*

Ghiberti has left us, in the valuable memoranda previously cited, the earliest biographical notice of Giotto. "The art of Painting," says he, "took its rise in a village of Etruria, nigh to Florence, by name Vespignano. A child was born there, of admirable genius. Cimabue, the painter, passing by on his road to Bologna, beheld him sitting on the ground, and drawing a sheep from nature on a smooth stone. Marvelling to see a child so young design so well, and perceiving that he had the art from nature, he enquired his name. The child answered and said, 'I am called Giotto, and my father's name is Bon-

done, and he lives in this cottage hard by.' Cimabue went in with Giotto to his father; Cimabue's presence was most noble; he begged the boy of the father, and the father was wretchedly poor; he gave up the child to Cimabue; Cimabüe took him away with him, and Giotto was his disciple."—Such is the original and simple narrative of an interview which has been the theme of so many pens and pencils in later times. I need only add, that Giotto was ten years old when it took place, that he then kept his father's flock, like David before his election to empire, that he was born in 1276,* that his name was a contraction either of Ambrogiotto or of Angiolotto, diminutives of Ambrogio and Angiolo, the latter the name borne by his grandfather,—and that his childhood had been that of genius, quick in impulse and action, rendering him dear to his father and all his acquaintance. These additional particulars are supplied for the most part by Vasari in his precious Lives of the Architects, Sculptors, and Painters of Italy.

Under Cimabue the young student made the most rapid progress. But it was from Nature, his original preceptress, that he learnt most, and his unwearied

* *Vasari.*—Baldinucci, basing his argument on the presumed accuracy of Vasari's chronology of Giotto's works, suggests 1265 or 1266 as the more probable date; certainly it seems extraordinary that a youth of twenty should have been invited to Rome and paid so highly as Giotto was for his works in S. Peter's. On the other hand, his description as "adhuc satis juvenis," in 1306, to be noticed hereafter, would scarcely be appropriate to a man of forty.

application in designing not only her grandest but her minutest features, was ere long nobly rewarded, when after painting a fly on the nose of one of his master's figures, Cimabue twice attempted to brush it away before discovering the deception,—a petty trick, oft-times emulated by inferior geniuses, yet not undeserving of commemoration when recorded of him who may be termed, though in the noblest sense, the parent of the 'Naturalisti.'*

To these influences must be added that of the antique and of Niccola Pisano, whether exerted through his works at Bologna or Pisa, or in the first instance through those of his son Giovanni. Cimabue doubtless had improved under it also; but it was reserved for Giotto to detect the principle on which that great man worked, and carry it out consistently, in spirit and in detail, in his own peculiar department of dramatic painting.

His first independent works are said to have been executed for the Badia of Florence, but they have been destroyed,† as have also the frescoes in the Car-

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* *Vasari.*

† He painted the frescoes and altar-piece of the Cappella Maggiore, *Ghiberti*[a] and *Vasari.*—Vasari praises the attitude and expression of the Virgin in the Annunciation, startled and timorous, as ready to fly from the angelic presence. The recent editor, Signor Masselli, suggests that the Annunciation in the Academy, which was brought from the Badia, may perhaps be a repetition of it. It is a pleasing picture, with the soft expression and a tendency to the colouring of the Sienese school.

[a] The punctuation of Ghiberti's memoir, here and elsewhere, as printed by Cicognara, is very incorrect.

mine, representing the life of S. John the Baptist, which he is supposed to have painted at a very early period.* Perhaps the large Madonna and child in the Academy,† removed thither from the church of the Ognissanti, is his earliest surviving picture. But nothing can be pointed out with certainty as his, anterior to 1295 or 1296,‡ the period apparently at

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* They were destroyed by fire in 1771. The following year, Mr. Patch, an Englishman, published engravings of six of the frescoes, but from very indifferent copies, and five of the heads, traced from the originals, which had escaped the flames and come into his possession. Two of these heads are now in the collection of Mr. Rogers.

† This picture is cited by Ghiberti. Vasari mentions it just before the Campanile. The Virgin is majestic, but not beautiful, seated on a throne, surrounded by angels, reminding one of the arrangement of Cimabue.

‡ The six frescoes of the history of Job, in the Campo Santo at Pisa, attributed to Giotto by Vasari, but respecting which Ghiberti is silent, have been shown by Dr. Ernst Förster to be the work of Francesco da Volterra, who began them in August, 1371. *Beiträge*, &c. p. 114.—The subject, whether chosen intentionally or not, aptly illustrates the pious and noble constancy of Pisa in the midst of national misfortune. Four of the series have been entirely destroyed; two remain, but mere wrecks. One of them represents the appearance of Satan before Our Saviour, seeking permission to tempt the patriarch, while, to the right, the trials have already begun,—his servants are being killed, his cattle driven away by the Chaldeans; in the other, Job is seen seated in his misery, naked, covered with sores and visited by his three comforters, while in the remainder of the picture, the Deity addresses them in reproof after the interview.—The attitudes are noble, the countenances expressive, the angels attendant on Our Saviour beautiful, strongly resembling Cimabue's; the Satan is very humble, crushed-looking, but venomous,—his figure purely Gothic, horned, hoofed, bat-winged, and with a serpent writhing round him.—The fragments that remain have

which his reputation reached the ear of the reigning pontiff, Boniface VIII., and procured him the honour of an invitation to the capital of the Christian world.

Boniface, we are told, was desirous of adding to the decorations of S. Peter's; he despatched one of his courtiers to Tuscany to ascertain the truth as to Giotto's merit. The messenger, after procuring drawings from various artists at Siena, called on Giotto at his bottega in Florence, and stating the object of his journey, begged of him a specimen of his pencil to send to Rome. Giotto took a sheet of drawing-paper and a crayon, and resting the tip of his little finger firmly on the paper, and drawing the latter round by each corner successively with his left hand, described a circle in the expeditious manner so familiar now-a-days in our schools and universities, but which would appear from the astonishment expressed at this simple device by the wisest heads of Christendom, to have been of his own invention. "Here," said he, presenting it with a smile to the envoy, "here is your drawing." — "What?" replied the other, "is this all?"—"Nay," answered Giotto, "'tis more than enough; send it along with the others, and you will see how it will be esteemed of."—The courtier took his leave in no small discontent, conceiving himself laughed at, and unable to extract any further satisfaction from Giotto's portfolio. He sent the sheet of paper, however, to the Pope, describing

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been engraved by Lasinio the elder, in the 'Pitture a fresco del Campo Santo di Pisa, 1812.'

the manner in which Giotto had described the circle, without moving his arm and without compasses, and the result proved as the artist expected,—Boniface, on seeing it, opened his eyes as wide as his ambassador, but with a sentiment of admiration as well as surprise, and, fully satisfied that he was the most wonderful painter of his time, sent for him forthwith.*

Arrived at Rome,† Giotto was employed in painting the principal chapel and the great altar-piece of S. Peter's,‡ the former in fresco, the latter in tempera—works long since destroyed,§—and in

* The phrase 'round as the O of Giotto,' has ever since been proverbial in Tuscany. Vasari misnames the pontiff, by a palpable error, Benedict IX.

† Probably in 1295, Boniface having been elected Pope in December, 1294, and Giotto, according to Vasari, was six years absent from Florence, which would carry his residence at Rome over the Jubilee. Vasari, however, is generally most inaccurate in his dates.

‡ "Di sua mano dipinse la cappella e la tavola di S. Piero in Roma." *Ghiberti.*—"Nella tribuna di S. Piero...cinque storie della vita di Cristo, e nella sagrestia la tavola principale." *Vasari.* Both evidently speak of the same *tavola*, or picture, which had probably been removed to the sacristy, when the old basilica was demolished by Julius II.

§ Unless the pictures now in the Sacristy, attributed to Giotto, and parts, apparently, of one large one, be the remains of the *tavola* mentioned by Ghiberti and Vasari. They are painted on the opposite sides, which adds to the probability, and exhibit traces, not only of Cimabue, in the Christ enthroned and surrounded by angels, but of the influence of the old mosaics, in the attitude of Our Saviour (adopted, apparently, from the ancient mosaic of the tribune, engraved in Ciampini, tom. iii, tav. 13), in the Virgin and child attended by angels, and in the triple tire of S. Peter's hair. They are engraved in the great work of Pistolesi on the Vatican, tom. ii, tav. 31, 32, 33. And see also the illustrative text, pp. 173 sqq.

executing the 'Navicella di S. Pietro,' now, after many migrations, fixed in front of the portico of the more modern edifice; this latter work is in mosaic, a branch of art in which, as I have already mentioned, he was probably instructed by Cavallini, although there is no record of his having ever practised it save on this one occasion.* The design, however, is his own, adopted and improved from a composition of great antiquity among the Latins, symbolising the ship of the Church Militant ploughing her way through the sea of this world.† S. Peter holds the rudder, the Apostles are scattered up and down the vessel; some are praying, all betray embarrassment and consternation; two demons, blowing through long horns, excite the tempest that distends the sail, and the Evangelists, looking down from the clouds, represent the supernatural aid of heaven which neutralises their malice. In front of the composition is seen, on the one side, S. Peter with his line, figurative of the Church's vocation to fish for souls, on the other, Our Saviour supporting Peter when sinking in the water, on which he had attempted to walk, signifying probably that, without faith in Christ and the strength of his sustaining arm, neither

* One would therefore suppose that Giotto had merely furnished the design, leaving the execution to Cavallini, were it not that Vasari, Ghiberti and a Martyrology cited by Baldinucci (*vide infra*), explicitly ascribe it to him *in toto*. Vasari, indeed, in the life of Cavallini, admits his "avendo con esso lui (*i. e.* Giotto) lavorato nella nave di musaico in S. Piero."

† It occurs on an ancient Christian gem, engraved in the 'Roma Subterranea,' tom. ii, p. 475, and described *supra*, tom. i, p. 18.

Church nor Churchman is sufficient to stand on the yielding waters of human infirmity. This celebrated mosaic was either begun, or in the course of execution, in 1298, as is proved by a Martyrology cited by Baldinucci.*

According to Vasari, Giotto also painted, on the walls of the nave of S. Peter's, the history of the Old and New Testament.† But Ghiberti is silent. And neither of these authorities alludes to the frescoes of the porch of the Lateran, of which the solitary relic now remaining is the portrait of Pope Boniface, between two cardinals, proclaiming the Jubilee of 1300, now attached to a pillar in the right nave of the church. It is a very weak and washy performance, and it requires some resolution to admit the possibility that it may be by Giotto.‡

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* Tom. i, p. 109, edit. *Manni*.—From a 'Liber Benefactorum,' quoted in the Martyrology, it appears that Giotto was paid for the 'Navicula S. Petri' two thousand two hundred and twenty florins, for painting the tribune five hundred gold florins, and for the picture over the high altar eight hundred; and that he also painted there "multa alia, quæ enumerare esset longissimum."

† In the life of Perino del Vaga, Vasari states that that painter and his friend, M. Niccolò Acciajuolo, were standing by while the workmen were pulling down the ancient basilica; they came to a wall on which Giotto had painted a Madonna, with Orso dell' Anguillare, Senator of Rome, who afterwards crowned Petrarch in the Capitol in 1341, kneeling at her feet; moved with pity, they interfered to preserve the Madonna, cutting it off the wall, and fixing it under the organ of S. Peter's,—the workmen were allowed to proceed after Perino had taken a drawing of the Senator. This work may probably have been executed at some later period of Giotto's career.

‡ The colouring and the elongated eye could hardly have been shared with Giotto so early by any other painter. On the other

After fulfilling his engagements at Rome, Giotto probably returned direct to Florence,* where two new fields were ready for his pencil, the chapel in the palace of the Podestà, now the Bargello, and the church of S. Croce.†

The former was probably begun first. After having been for two centuries coated with white-wash, divided into two stories and partitioned into prisoners' cells, it has lately been partially restored to our admiration. Relying on Vasari's assertion, that Giotto had introduced in it the portrait of Dante, Signor Bezzi, Mr. Kirkup and some other gentlemen obtained permission from government to remove the white-wash at their own expence, which was done with admirable address by the painter Marini, to whose disinterested zeal and skill in restoration, the old fresco-painters are so deeply indebted;‡ he discovered the portrait, and uncovered the greater part of the composition in which it figures. It is a Gloria, on a very large scale, com-

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hand, the drooping head of one of the cardinals, and the letters of the inscription are unlike Giotto's style, and rather resemble that of the Roman or early European school, which I have distinguished as such from the Byzantine.

* If he painted the portrait of Boniface at Rome in 1299 or 1300, and that of Dante in the Bargello at Florence in the latter year, he could scarcely have had time to work elsewhere during the interval.

† The first stone of S. Croce was laid on the 3d of May, 1294, according to Giovanni Villani. Giotto's works there must thus have been subsequent to his return from Rome.

‡ Signor Antonio Marini, a native of Prato, now resides at Florence.

pletely covering the altar-wall; the head of Christ, full of dignity, appears above, and lower down, the escutcheon of Florence, supported by angels, with two rows of Saints, male and female, attendant to the right and left, in front of whom stand a company of the *magnates* of the city, headed by two crowned personages, close to one of whom, to the right, stands Dante. The enthusiasm of the Florentines, on the announcement of the discovery, resembled that of their ancestors when Borgo Allegri received its name from their rejoicings in sympathy with Cimabue—"L'abbiamo, il nostro poeta!" was the universal cry, and for days afterwards the Bargello was thronged with a continuous succession of pilgrim visitors. The portrait, though stiff, is amply satisfactory to the admirers of Dante. He stands there, full of dignity, in the beauty of his manhood, a pomegranate in his hand, and wearing the graceful falling cap of the day—the upper part of his face smooth, lofty and ideal, revealing the Paradiso, as the stern, compressed, under-jawed mouth does the Inferno. There can be little doubt, from the prominent position assigned him in the composition, as well as from his personal appearance, that this fresco was painted in, or immediately after, the year 1300, when he was one of the Priors of the republic and in the thirty-fifth year of his age,—the very epoch, the "mezzo cammin della vita," at which he dates his Vision. In February, 1302, he was exiled.*

* Dante was elected prior on the 15th June, 1300; in 1301

The remaining walls of the chapel are entirely painted by Giotto, who has represented the history of S. Mary Magdalen on the side-walls in two rows of compartments, and on that of entrance, the Inferno, or Hell. Some of these frescoes, however, are apparently of much later execution than the Gloria,—the Inferno I believe to be the last effort of his pencil; and among the others, so far as they have been as yet uncovered, I may mention the Resurrection of Lazarus and the 'Noli me tangere,' as peculiarly beautiful.*

Of Giotto's works in S. Croce but very little is now visible. He painted four of its chapels in fresco, with their altar-pieces in tempera,† whether all con-

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he was at Rome, and was still absent in 1302, when he was condemned and declared an exile.

* Many of these frescoes are quite defaced; those which remain are, the Feast in the house of Simon the Pharisee, the Resurrection of Lazarus, and the Maries at the Sepulchre—in the upper row; and in the lower, beginning from the right of the Gloria—the 'Noli me tangere,' the Magdalen penitent in the desert, (the priest giving her his robe,) her Communion, the Inferno (opposite the altar,) the Prince of Marseilles finding his child on the desert island,—a Saint, between the windows, and a feast (I am uncertain which) immediately to the left of the Gloria.

† "Nell' Ordine de' Frati Minori [dipinse] quattro cappelle e quattro tavole molto eccellentemente." *Ghiberti.*—"Tre fra la sagrestia e la cappella grande," (that is, three to the right of the choir, or principal chapel,) "ed una dall' altra banda," according to Vasari, who adds that the first of the three contained frescoes from the life of S. Francis, the second four, from the lives of the Baptist and the Apostle John, the third several, representing martyrdoms of the Apostles, and the fourth six, the the Nativity of the Virgin, her Marriage, her Annunciation, the

secutively or not is uncertain; the solitary fresco that now remains is undoubtedly an early work. It represents the feast of Herod, and the presentation of the head of S. John the Baptist to Herodias.

In all these early paintings Giotto's endeavour at reform is evidenced by the substitution of the half-closed elongated eye and a pale reddish colouring, for the round spectral orbs and the deeper tints of the styles of Byzantine origin—the latter an innovation scarcely to be commended, but he greatly improved in this respect afterwards.

Nearly at this time also, and certainly before the 11th of October, 1303, on which day Pope Boniface died, he prepared the designs for the façade of the Duomo, which were sculptured, as I mentioned in the preceding letter, by Andrea Pisano.*

Giotto now stood without a rival in his art, and, save Buffalmacco, scarcely with a competitor; Mino and Duccio, indeed, were not unworthy of the former epithet, but their fame was confined within the narrow circle of Siena—that of Giotto was Catholic and universal. His engagements at Florence were drawing to a close, and all Italy stood on the tip-toe of expectation and uncertainty whither he would next bend his steps. Nor was it merely the reputation of his genius; his peculiarities of person and character were widely known, and excited the liveliest curiosity and interest.

Adoration of the Magi, her Purification and her Death. Possibly these may be still existing under the modern plaster.

* Vide *supra*, p. 125.

Nature, in a most unusual freak, had married in him the most graceful mind and the kindest heart to a form and visage of repulsive ugliness—ugliness so repulsive as to have been emphatically noticed by every one of his great contemporaries—by Petrarch in his Familiar Letters, by Boccaccio in the Decameron, and by Dante in a colloquy with the painter himself, recorded traditionally by a commentator of the fourteenth century.* But, on the other hand,

* "Accidit autem semel, quòd dum Giottus pingeret Paduæ, adhuc satis juvenis, unam Capellam in loco ubi fuit olim Theatrum sive Arena, Dantes pervenit ad locum. Quem Giottus honorificè acceptum duxit ad domum suam. Ubi Dantes videns plures infantulos ejus summè deformes, et (ut citò dicam) patri simillimos, petivit, 'Egregie Magister! nimis miror, quòd quum in arte Pictoriâ dicamini non habere parem, unde est quòd alias figuras facitis tam formosas, vestras verò tam turpes?'—Cui Giottus subridens [illegible] respondit, 'Quia pingo de die, sed fingo de nocte.'" *Benvenuti Imolensis Commentarii in Dantis Comoediam, Muratori, Antiq. Ital. Medii Aevi*, tom. i, p. 1185.—To the same effect Petrarch,—"Duos ego novi pictores egregios nec formosos, Jottum Florentinum civem, cujus inter modernos fama ingens est, et Simonem Senensem." *Epist. Famil.* lib. [illegible], ep. xvii.—And Boccaccio,—"Egli [illegible] spesso, che, come la fortuna sotto vili arti alcuna volta grandissimi tesori di virtù nasconde, . . . così ancora sotto turpissime forme d' uomini si troovano maravigliosi ingegni dalla natura essere stati riposti. La qual cosa assai apparve in due nostri cittadini, . . l' uno il quale Messer Forese da Rabatta fu chiamato, essendo di persona piccolo e sformato, con viso piatto, e ricagnato, che a qualunque de' Baronci più trasformato l' ebbe, sarebbe stato sozzo, . . e l' altro, il cui nome fu Giotto, . . Ma quantunque la sua arte fosse grandissima, non era egli perciò, nè di persona, nè d' aspetto, in niuna cosa più bello che fosse Messer Forese." *Decam.* Giorn. vi, nov. 5.

[a] The same story is told of an ancient painter, L. Mallius, "qui optimus pictor Romæ habebatur," *Macrob. Sat.* 2, 2, quoted by Sillig, *Dict. of Ancient Artists.* But this does not weaken the testimony to Giotto's ugliness.

his conversation overflowed with humour and sparkled with repartee; no man told a story with more point or elegance; his manner was kindness and courtesy itself—and when we are informed, in addition to this, that he was a man thoroughly "dabbene," without a shadow of envy, and no less excellent a Christian than a painter, we cannot wonder that he should have been popular everywhere and loved by every one, and have even become, dissimilar as were the broad outlines of their respective characters, the personal friend of the lovers of Beatrice and of Laura. Much of this intellectual and moral character is perceptible in the bust of Giotto, erected to his memory by Lorenzo de' Medici, in the Duomo. He appears there with a full cheek, under-jawed, with compressed lips, ready apparently to break into a smile,—the general cast of the features firm and decided, yet full of fun. But no doubt the general ugliness has been softened down in this more recent version of his lineaments.

I may close this first period of Giotto's career with two events of importance in his life, and which certainly preceded his first expedition to Lombardy,—his attainment of the full rank of Magister, or master in his craft*—a title which, Boccaccio tells us, he

* A picture of the Virgin and child, attended by S. Peter and S. Paul, and the archangels Michael and Gabriel, painted for Bologna, originally in several compartments, now divided between that town and Milan, and inscribed 'Opus Magistri Jocti Florent.,' is so strongly marked with the characteristics of Giotto's style, (the eye elongated to caricature, the dignified but

ever, out of his extreme modesty, declined to use*—and his marriage to Ciuta di Lapo,† a lady of whose character and personal appearance nothing is known, except that her beauty, if she possessed any, failed to neutralise the evil influence of his own uncomeliness on the outward mould of their mutual progeny; his children were (at least in infancy) little lumps of deformity, as hideous as himself.‡

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harsh features, the pale colouring, &c.,) that, but for the epithet 'Magister,' I should consider it one of his earliest works. This picture may have been painted on his road to Padua. Longhi, in his republication of Malvasia's Guide to Bologna, tells us that Giotto was eight months there, painting this picture,—*Il Passeggiere Disingannato*, p. 363, edit. 1782.—He does not give any authority. See Förster's observations, *Beiträge*, &c., p. 143.

* "Giotto..meritamente una delle luci della Fiorentina gloria dir si puote; e tanto più, quanto con maggiore umiltà, Maestro degli altri in sè vivendo, quella acquistò, sempre rifiutando d'esser chiamato Maestro. Il quale titolo da lui lungo più tempo rifiutato, quanto con maggior disidero da quegli che ben sapevano di lui o da' suoi discepoli era cupidamente usurpato." *Giorn.* vi, *nov.* 5.—Giotto signs himself 'Magister' in the Madonna mentioned in the preceding note, probably an early work. But in the S. Francis, once at Pisa, now in Paris, and certainly (see a note to Section fourth, *infra*,) a later picture, the inscription is simply, 'Opus Joctti.' In the legal papers cited by Baldinucci, Giotto, even during his life-time, is frequently designed, simply, 'Giocto Pierozzi.'

† She was a Florentine lady, according to documents cited by Baldinucci, tom. i, p. 133, and they had several little children living while Giotto was painting at Padua; see *supra*, p. 177, *note*.

‡ This appears from the story told by Benvenuto of Imola, already cited. For particulars respecting Giotto's children, see his Life by Baldinucci.

SECTION 2.—*Second Period—Giotto's first visit to Lombardy.*

WE may now accompany Giotto on his visit to Lombardy in and about the year 1306. He has been well described as pilgrimising over Italy, scattering in every district the seeds of art, destined to flourish and bear fruit long after he had himself passed away from the scene.*

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* If the frescoes at Ravenna, attributed to Giotto, be really his, I have little doubt they were executed immediately subsequent to the Madonna of Bologna, and previous to the chapel of the Arena presently to be mentioned. They merit notice, whether attributable to the master's hand or not. In S. Giovanni della Sagra, the four Evangelists on the vault of the fourth chapel to the left are the only vestige of Giottesque workmanship,—they have been sadly injured by restoration. The frescoes of S. Chiara I was unable to see, the church being suppressed, and the key in the custody of a man who, during the whole period of my stay, was absent at the Pineta, that limbo of all things mislaid or out of mind at Ravenna. But those of S. Maria in porto fuori are more accessible.[a] According to tradition, the whole church was painted by Giotto, but time and white-wash have been busily at work, and the frescoes of the presbytery and of the chapel of S. Matthew, at the extremity of the Southern nave, are the only ones that repay a minute examination.—In the former series, the history of the Virgin is abridged into six compartments, of which the Massacre of the Innocents, and her own Death are the most remarkable, the former for much invention and merit in the composition, the latter for the characteristic attitudes of the Apostles and the

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[a] Vasari mentions as works of Giotto at Ravenna, "alcune storie in fresco intorno alla chiesa (di S. Francesco), che sono ragionevoli,"—and in S. Giovanni Evangelista, "una cappella a fresco."—According to M. Bernhard, author of the life of Giotto in the 'Biographie Universelle,' "Une seule des peintures qu'il exécuta alors à St. François subsiste encore; elle se voit sur un des murs extérieurs."

The great object of this expedition was to paint in fresco the chapel of the Arena at Padua, a most

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beauty of the Virgin's face, and for the singularity, that the Saviour receiving his mother's soul in his arms is represented with the youthful face of the Catacombs and the ancient mosaics, the first and the last time, so far as I am aware, that Giotto (if the author) has adopted this idea. Other Byzantine reminiscences also occur here. The Massacre is broken by a pointed-arched niche, within which Our Saviour is represented administering the Eucharist, presenting the wafer to S. Peter with his right hand, and the cup to S. Paul with the left, a composition strongly resembling that on the 'Dalmatica di S. Leone.' And a Martyrdom, in the chapel at the extremity of the Northern nave, is completely the traditional composition of the Menologion.—But the frescoes in the chapel of S. Matthew, though much injured, are the most interesting. The First represents his call to the Apostolate,—he is seated, a young man of a pleasing countenance, and wearing the same red falling cap worn by Dante in the chapel of the Bargello; he appears about to rise up and follow Our Saviour—an admirable figure, full of dignity, who turns away, signing to him most expressively. In the Second compartment, he is seen healing a multitude of sick and infirm people at the capital of Ethiopia, where, according to the legend, he preached the gospel after the dispersion of the Apostles; the attitudes and expression of the decrepid halt are excellent. In the Third, almost destroyed, a large dragon is still visible, couching before him,—two magicians were sent by them, tyrannized over the country, and came to dispute his preaching, each accompanied by his dragon, spitting fire from its mouth and nostrils. S. Matthew wrote forth to meet them, and making the sign of the cross, the monsters sank into slumber at his feet. Of the remaining compartments, the best preserved is the Sixth, representing the baptism of the young King and Queen, the crown of his ministry; both are in white, the King in front, the Queen, with braided hair and her hands meekly crossed, behind him. The two last compartments, the Seventh and Eighth, probably represented the Apostle's martyrdom thirty-five years afterwards, during which interval he had acted as bishop of the Church of Ethiopia; the lower compartment is quite effaced,—in the lunette above it, angels are seen wafting

interesting little building, which I must recommend to your warmest admiration and love.*

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the soul to heaven.—The colouring throughout these frescoes is very white and pale, the length of the eyes is exaggerated, the drawing not very good, and the expression caricatured whenever strong emotion is represented,—these are faults common to the early Giottesque school, and more particularly to that section of it which seems to have belonged originally to the traditional Roman one; on the other hand, the boldness of invention, the expression, the attitudes and gesticulation, are merits characteristic of Giotto,—while the Byzantine reminiscences, at least as numerous in proportion as in the frescoes of the chapel of the Arena, taken in connection with the general superiority of the latter, might have argued their proximate but prior execution, were it not that the backgrounds in the frescoes of the tribune are filled with architecture instead of the typical altar of the Byzantine mosaics, constantly introduced at Padua.—I should not, in fact, be surprised if these frescoes of Ravenna were by the author of the life of the Beata Michelina (now white-washed) in the cloister of S. Francesco at Rimini, described with such rapture by Vasari as among the best works of Giotto, but certainly not his, as the Beata died as late as 1356.—Who this artist was, I know not; possibly the Bitinus whose picture of S. Julian, representing the Saint, at full length, in the midst, with his history in small compartments around him—a work of much merit, dated 1408—is preserved in the chapel of S. Giuliano at Rimini.(*)—But the Giotteschi were very numerous in those days in Romagna.

* In the anonymous 'Notizia d' Opere di disegno,' written in

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* The small compartments represent, 1. The prefect of Cilicia exhorting Julian to sacrifice; 2. The same exhorting Julian's mother to persuade him to do so; 3. S. Julian thrown into the sea in a sack full of serpents; 4. His burial on a cliff of the island of Proconnesus or Marmara, where the body had been thrown up; 5. Destroyed; 6. His sarcophagus (shaped like those of Ravenna) dislodged by the crumbling away of the cliffs, and sailing, guided by angels, over the sea; 7 and 8. The Voyage of the Sarcophagus; 8. Its arrival on the shore of the territory of Rimini; 9. The attempt of the people to drag the sarcophagus to the cathedral of Rimini by buffaloes, who cannot move it; 10. The prayers, &c. of the clergy, consequent on this; 11. The buffaloes drawing it to the cathedral, attended by the bishop and priests; 12. The opening

It was erected by Enrico Scrovegno, son of the Reginald of that name, placed by Dante in hell for avarice and usury. The date of its structure and that of its decoration by Giotto are fixed by unusually clear evidence, the former in 1303 by an inscription,* and the latter in 1306, or thereabouts, by a concurrence of circumstances:—Dante's name appears as a witness to a deed, dated at Padua in 1306;† the walls could scarcely have been dry and ready for the painter before that year, or at soonest, before 1305; Giotto, according to Benvenuto of Imola, the commentator on Dante, was "adhuc satis juvenis," when he painted there,—and in 1306, if born in 1276, he would be exactly thirty; we may assume that year therefore as the central date of the frescoes in question,—which derive moreover a peculiar interest from the belief entertained that Enrico

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the sixteenth century and edited by Morelli, (*Bassano*, [illegible] 1800,) Cimabue is said to have painted in the church of the Carmine at Padua. If this (as most probably would be the case) was towards the close of his life, Giotto may have worked under him, and have thus been already known at Padua. Possibly even Cimabue might have been on his journey to Padua through Bologna, when he first met with Giotto at [illegible].

* See Morelli's Notes on the Anonymous [illegible], p. [illegible].

† *Morelli* (*Notizia, &c.*), p. [illegible],—who refers to the "Novelle Lettere Fiorentine," 1748, col. [illegible].—Dante quitted Padua the same year, and was present at the conclusion of a treaty at Luni on the 6th October.

of the sarcophagus by the bishop and discovery of the body of S. Julian incorrupt within it. The subjects are well composed; there is a good deal of expression and [illegible] in the figures, [illegible] ing is pleasing. But the picture is in a sad state of neglect and ruin, and covered with cobwebs.—Bitinus [illegible] pupil styled, in 1456, 'Magister Antonius Pictor quondam Mag. Bictini Pictoris de Arimino.' *Lanzi.*

belonged to the fraternity of the 'Cavalieri di Santa Maria,' instituted about the beginning of the thirteenth century in order to promote the veneration of the Madonna,* and that the chapel in question was built, partly at least, at their expence, and for their joint worship.† It certainly adds to the plausibility of this theory, that nowhere (save in the Duomo of Orvieto) is the legendary history of the Virgin told with such minuteness.

The heart must indeed be cold to the charms of youthful art that can enter this little sanctuary without a glow of delight. From the roof, with its sky of ultramarine, powdered with stars and interspersed with medallions containing the heads of Our Saviour, the Virgin and the Apostles, to the mock pannelling of the nave, below the windows, the whole is completely covered with frescoes, in excellent preservation, and all more or less painted by Giotto's own hand, except six in the tribune, which however have apparently been executed from his cartoons.‡ With

* They subsequently degenerated, and were styled the 'Frati Godenti,' for their luxury and vice. See Giov. Villani's brief notice of the order, lib. vii, cap. 13.

† See the interesting work of the Marchese P. E. Selvatico, 'Sulla Cappellina degli Scrovegni nell' Arena di Padova, e sui Freschi di Giotto in essa dipinti,' *Padua*, 8vo, 1836, p. 13.— The theory mentioned in the text was started by Federici in his 'Storia dei Cavalieri Godenti.'

‡ This, I think, may be inferred from the same peculiar eye and the same type of the female bust and visage prevailing in

* A 'Description of the Chapel of the Annunciata dell' Arena, or Giotto's chapel, at Padua,' with illustrative engravings, was privately printed by the late Lady Calcott in 1835, and has recently been published.

the exception of these, the whole seem to have been designed and painted *de suite*. Forty-four compartments, carrying the history of the Virgin and Our Saviour from the repulse of S. Joachim to Mary's Coronation in heaven, line the nave, the triumphal arch, and the choir; a Christ in glory fills the lunette above the triumphal arch;* the Last Judgment covers the whole entrance-wall, and the Theological and Cardinal Virtues, with their antagonist Vices, most ingeniously allegorised, face each other, to the right and left, below the windows of the nave. Such is the general arrangement,—I shall briefly enumerate them *seriatim*, to assist examination on the spot, referring you to my preliminary Memoranda for the detailed legend of the Madonna.

South Wall—Highest Row—Beginning from the Triumphal Arch.

1. S. Joachim repelled by the High Priest.—The

both.—The six frescoes were painted by Taddeo di Bartolo, a Sienese by birth, but Giottesco by adoption, invited for the purpose, according to Vasari, by the elder Francesco da Carrara. Vasari has however confounded this Taddeo di Bartolo with his celebrated namesake, hereafter to be mentioned under the Sienese school.

* Can this be the fresco alluded to by Ghiberti in his brief notice of the chapel? "Dipense nella Chiesa cioè tutta è di sua mano della Rena di Padova e di sua mano una gloria mondana," —And to which Vasari seems to refer, speaking of Giotto's works subsequent to the foundation of the Campanile,—"Appresso andato di nuovo a Padoa, oltre a molte altre cose e cappelle ch' egli vi dipinse, fece nel luogo dell' Arena, (his first and only notice of the place,) una Gloria mondana, che gli arrecò molto onore e utile."

temple is represented by an altar under a ciborium, as in the Byzantine paintings and mosaics; this obtains throughout the series. It here stands within a marble cancellum, at the further end of which is an ambo or reading-desk; a priest sits within the screen, confessing a young man who kneels at his feet, and in front of it the High Priest Issachar is seen thrusting away Joachim.

II. S. Joachim's retreat to his Shepherds in the wilderness. He advances, a very noble dignified figure, with drooping head and clasped hands, lost in his uncomfortable thoughts and heedless of his dog who runs up barking to welcome him; two of the shepherds, standing in front of their hut and among their flock, gaze earnestly at him, as if uncertain what to do.

III. The Annunciation to S. Anna.—While praying in her chamber, disquieted at the absence of her husband.

IV. The Annunciation to S. Joachim.—He has just sacrificed a lamb on an altar, elevated on a high mound in the centre of the composition; the hand of God issues from heaven, as in Byzantine art, in token of acceptance; Joachim kneels before the altar on his hands and knees, but looks towards Gabriel, a majestic figure, who communicates his message in the attitude and holding the same sceptre with which he is usually represented in the mosaics.

V. An angel appearing to Joachim in a dream.—I do not know to what incident this refers; the scene is still in the wilderness.

VI. The Embrace of Joachim and Anna at the Golden Gate of Jerusalem.—A composition frequently reiterated, in its main outline, by the scholars of Giotto.

North Wall—Highest Row.

VII. The Nativity of the Virgin.—The traditional composition.

VIII. The Dedication of the Virgin.—The germ of a composition, afterwards beautifully developed, but here imperfect and deficient in grace. The temple, as usual, is represented by an altar and an ambo; the Virgin is a dwarf woman instead of a child,—the delineation of childhood was one of the latest triumphs of art.

IX. S. Joseph and the youths of the house of David presenting their rods to the High Priest.

X. The Suitors kneeling before the altar on which their rods are laid, silently expecting the miracle,—their attitudes varied and most expressive; full of feeling and simplicity.

XI. The Marriage of the Virgin and S. Joseph.—The High Priest, standing in front of the altar, joins their hands; behind the Virgin stand her bridesmaids, behind S. Joseph the unsuccessful suitors, one of whom steps forward to strike him, and another breaks his rod on his knee. Joseph bears his own rod, on the flower of which the Holy Spirit rests in the semblance of a dove. These ideas, with more or less variation, became traditional in the Giottesque school, and indeed in Italian art.

XII. The Virgin conducted by S. Joseph home.—Some of the female friends that accompany the procession are graceful in form and beautiful in feature.

On either side of the Triumphal Arch.

XIII., and XIV. The Annunciation.—The Virgin kneeling on one knee, Gabriel on both; a rich architectural background.

XV. (Immediately beneath No. XIV.) The Visitation.—Very expressive, especially the S. Elizabeth.

South Wall—Middle Row.

XVI. The Nativity of Our Lord.—The Byzantine composition; Giotto greatly improved upon this afterwards.

XVII. The Adoration of the Kings.—The Virgin seated under the manger-shed, attended to the right and left by S. Joseph and an angel,—her face sweet, though she is too matronly in form; the camels and attendants appear at the left extremity; the Kings advance to pay their homage; the eldest kneels to kiss Our Saviour's feet; the star, with a tail like a comet, rests over the shed.

XVIII. The Presentation of Our Saviour in the Temple.—The altar stands in the back-ground, but the High Priest does not appear; Simeon holds the child, who stretches his arms towards Mary, impatient to return to her; Anna, holding a scroll, stands behind Simeon, and an angel descends above her.

XIX. The Flight into Egypt,—an angel floating before them, pointing out the way.

XX. The Murder of the Innocents.—A heap of slaughtered infants lies in the midst; the mothers and soldiers struggle in groups around it, while Herod looks on from a projecting balcony to the left.—A very affecting composition, the heads so full of intense agony that the caricature of grief scarcely offends one; three principal figures arrest the eye—a mother whose child has been torn from her and is being stabbed before her face,—another, in agony, clasping her child to her breast and trying to pull it away from a soldier who holds it by the leg, and has upraised his sword to pierce it,—and a third, to the left, clasping her hands, half-turning away, but still lingeringly gazing on her dead infant lying on the heap.

North Wall—Middle Row.

XXI. The Dispute in the Temple.—Our Saviour seated under the central arch of a spacious circular hall—the Doctors in two rows—Joseph and Mary coming in, to the left. Strictly symmetrical.

XXII. Our Saviour's Baptism.—Strictly the Byzantine composition.

XXIII. The Marriage at Cana of Galilee.—A very remarkable composition, and the first in which Giotto has indulged his turn for satirical humour. The table, a triclinium, is spread in an open court; the Virgin sits nearly in the centre, Our Saviour at the extremity to the left; the married pair and an Apostle are placed between them. Our Saviour is in the act of commanding a youth to pour out and bear to the governor of the feast, who stands to the

right, between the table and a row of amphoras filled with the newly made wine—a broad-faced, bald-headed personage, with an enormous paunch, his head thrown back in the act of tossing off the contents of a *fiascone*; the Virgin looks towards him, holding up her hands as if to say, "Mark!"—while one of the attendants, standing beside him, expresses in his looks astonishment at the miracle.

XXIV. The Resurrection of Lazarus.—Our Saviour stands to the left, in front of two or three of his disciples, his countenance beautiful, his attitude noble, his right hand held up with the gesture at once of command and blessing; at his feet kneel Mary and Martha, side by side; to the right, in front of the cave, stands Lazarus between two Apostles, swathed up, pale and cadaverous, hardly yet alive; the lookers-on do not hold their noses, as in later repetitions of the subject, but they have wrapt their robes tightly over the lower part of their faces.—A most dramatic and touching composition, modified and improved from that, elsewhere mentioned, on the Byzantine 'Calendario' of the Baptistery of Florence, and afterwards repeated by Giotto, with further improvements, in the chapel of Bargello.

XXV. Our Saviour's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.—Bearing some resemblance to the older Byzantine and Latin compositions, which never however were, strictly speaking, traditional; but they are here infinitely improved upon.

XXVI. Our Saviour casting the money-changers out of the Temple.

Triumphal Arch—Left Wall.

XXVII. The bargain of Judas.—The Devil stands behind him, resting his hand on his back, as if impelling him to the crime. Judas is drest in yellow or saffron, the colour of treachery, constantly appropriated to him in ancient art.

Southern Wall—Lowest Row.

XXVIII. The Last Supper. — The Apostles are seated, front and back, at table, Our Saviour at the left end, John leaning on his breast, Judas and Our Saviour putting their hands into the dish at the same moment.

XXIX. Our Saviour washing the Apostles' feet.—At the moment of answering Peter's expostulation,—the composition excellent.

XXX. Judas' kiss.—The two heads admirably contrasted,—his coarse, vulgar, sensual, devilish, Our Saviour's mildly reproachful. S. Peter, to the left, armed with a large knife, cuts off the ear of Malchus, who submits to the operation with singular placidity. —Not well composed, but with much character in the individual figures and heads.

XXXI. Our Saviour before Caiaphas.

XXXII. Our Saviour mocked by the soldiers.—An admirable fresco, full of dramatic expression; the gesticulation is most singular, and derived probably from the 'mimica,' or language of the hand, traditional in Italy.

XXXIII. Our Saviour carrying his cross,—he turns

round to look at his mother, who is rudely thrust back by the multitude.

Northern Wall—Lowest Row.

XXXIV. The Crucifixion.—The Byzantine composition, in all its details, even to the *suppeditaneum*, or support for the feet, and the separate nails, which Giotto afterwards reduced to one; but with the addition of the Magdalen kneeling at the foot of the cross. The Virgin is represented fainting to the left, the soldiers disputing about the seamless robe to the right, —a number of angels in the air catching the blood, wringing their hands, &c.

XXXV. The Pietà, or Lamentation previous to the Burial.—The Byzantine composition, amplified and admirable. The body rests on the knees of the Virgin, who clasps the neck with her arms and bends forward to give it the last caress, her face disfigured by intense sorrow; Mary Magdalen supports the feet, Mary, sister of Lazarus, on the further side, clasps the hands,—Martha and the women from Galilee stand in bitter grief to the left; two figures in green and yellow drapery, their faces muffled up and invisible, sit with their backs towards the spectator, most impressive in their silent immobility; while S. John, who seems to have just returned to the mourning group, leans forward as if addressing the Virgin, pointing upwards to heaven with his right hand, and with his left to Nicodemus and Nathanael, standing at the right extremity of the compartment, as if saying, "All is now ready"—for the interment. A

crowd of angels, wiping their eyes and wringing their hands, float in the air.

XXXVI. The Resurrection.—To the left, the empty tomb, with the two angels seated on it, and pointing as if to say, "He is not here, but is risen;" the guards sleeping in front—good attempts at foreshortening; to the right, the 'Noli me tangere,'—Mary kneeling in her red robe of love, and stretching out her hands as one would to a spirit; the head is very beautiful and sweet, but not equal to that (of later date, as I suppose) in the chapel of the Bargello.

XXXVII. The Ascension.—A composition of extreme beauty, although perhaps rather too symmetrical. Our Saviour has taken his flight from the Mount of Olives; he is seen in profile, standing on a cloud, bending forwards, his hands outstretched, and his face raised, pushing as it were upwards to meet his Father,—two choirs of angels accompanying him. The Apostles kneel below, [illegible] to the right and left, [illegible] Judas—being vacant; the left row is headed by the Virgin; two angels float between the groups, swaying divergingly one from the other, and each pointing upwards and appearing to say, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." *Acts* i., 11, 12.

XXXVIII. The descent of the Holy Spirit.—The Byzantine composition.

Choir—North Wall.

XXXIX. Gabriel appearing to the Virgin, and offering her the palm-branch from Paradise, in token of her approaching death.—Much injured and scarcely recognisable.

XL. The Virgin's dying interview with S. John.—She is sitting up in bed, and John kneels before her, weeping and leaning his head on her lap. Our Saviour hovers in the air above them, and, outside the building, three of the Apostles are seen approaching, guided by a floating angel.

XLI. The Death of the Virgin, surrounded by the Apostles.—The Byzantine composition, slightly modified; the angels have just given her soul into the arms of Christ, who presses it to his bosom.

Choir—South Wall.

XLII. The Funeral Procession,—the bier borne by the Apostles, S. John in front as chief mourner, and carrying the palm-branch,—the High Priest's arm withered, as he attempts to overthrow the bier.

XLIII. The Assumption of the Virgin,—rising to heaven, attended by angels, the tomb below, and the Apostles, fallen to the ground to the right and left, veiling their faces or looking up after her.

XLIV. The Coronation of the Virgin by Our Saviour.

Lunette above the Triumphal Arch.

XLV. Our Saviour in glory, seated on his throne, and attended by angels to the right and left.

Entrance Wall.

XLVI. The Last Judgment.—A very remarkable fresco. The general outline is that of the traditional Byzantine composition. Our Saviour, a majestic figure, seated within the vesica piscis, (the sky above him filled with a countless host of angels, holding the banner of the cross, the column, &c.—others at his feet blowing the trumpet—and the Apostles ranged by six and six to his right and left,) extends his open palm towards the elect, the back of his hand towards the reprobate; the former are arranged in companies, each escorted by an angel, kings, queens, monks, seculars, &c.; some of their heads are beautiful. Lowest of all, to the left of the fresco, the graves discharge the "dead in Christ," the souls, as usual, represented as children, but (unintentionally of course) with [illegible] heads. The Inferno occupies the whole right side of the composition. It is connected with the earth by a bridge or natural arch, out of [illegible] the spirits of the condemned. Satan sits on the gaping [illegible], and around him the retributive punishments of the condemned, and, in some instances, the offences which provoked them, are represented with the most daring freedom.—Between the Inferno and the elect, directly beneath Our Saviour, the Cross is supported in the air by two angels; who hold up the transverse arm, while the lower end is sustained by a small figure, of the size of a child, who walks with it downwards from the mountain which forms the boundary of Hell.

Lower down, and to the left, a kneeling figure, probably Enrico Scrovegno, accompanied by a monk, holds up the model of the chapel towards three Saints, of whom the central one seems to be addressing him. This group is very beautiful.

Below the Windows of the Nave.

XLVII. Fourteen single figures representing the Theological and Cardinal Virtues, and their opposite Vices, in *chiaro-scuro* :—

1. Hope.—A youthful female figure, winged, soaring upwards towards a crown offered her by an angel.

2. Charity.—A middle-aged woman, dressed in a single robe, crowned with a wreath of flowers, three flames of fire lambent round her head,—holding a dish of fruit with one hand, and receiving with the other a purse from the hand of God, and standing on bags of money.

3. Faith.—A matronly figure, crowned with a mitre, her robe tattered, in token of 'evangelical poverty,' the keys of heaven hanging from her girdle—holding the Creed in one hand and trampling upon idols.

4. Justice.—Seated on a Gothic throne, and adjusting the scales of a balance suspended

1. Despair.—She has hanged herself, at the instigation of the Devil.

2. Envy.—An old woman, standing in flames, with the ear and the horns of Satan—a snake issuing from her mouth which turns round and bites her; she clutches a purse with her left hand, and stretches out her right like a claw.

3. Infidelity.—A man, (how just the satire!) standing totteringly beside a fire, typical of heresy or hell, and supporting in his right hand a female figure, (Idolatry?) who holds a tree in her right hand and a cord (the emblem of subjection) in her left, the cord being passed round his neck.

4. Injustice.—A giant, (so figured in proportion to the trees and shrubs in front of

before her — a little angel, bending from the one scale, offers a crown to a just man; an executioner, in the opposite scale, armed with a sword, beheads an oppressor. Scenes of hunting, dancing, &c. are represented in a small composition below, indicating that the enjoyment of life is the fruit of the equal enforcement of law.

5. Temperance.—Her mouth bridled, and holding a sword, which she has bound round with thongs so tightly that it cannot be unsheathed, at least till they are unwound.

6. Fortitude.—Robed in a lion's skin, and half sheltered behind a shield bearing the device of a lion, and bristled with spear-heads and with a broken [illegible] but with sword in [illegible] her opportunity [illegible]

7. Prudence.—Double-visaged, the head which looks [illegible] apparently that of [illegible] desk, gazing into a [illegible] and holding in her right hand a pair of compasses.

him,) seated under the battlemented portal of his castle; his hands armed with talons—holding a sword and a long rake like those with which they pull drift-wood out of the rivers in Italy. Below, in a small compartment, similar to the one on the opposite wall, a lady is dismounted from her horse and stripped by robbers.

5. Anger.—A woman gazing upwards in fury, and tearing open her breast.

6. Inconstancy. — Whirling round and round upon the wheel of Fortune, the wind bellying her robe above her head.

[illegible]

7. Folly.—A [illegible] looking upwards [illegible] "Cœlum ipsum petimus stultitia," &c.

These frescoes of the Arena form a most important document in the history of Giotto's mind, exhibiting all his peculiar merits, although in a state as yet of immature development. They are full of fancy and invention; the composition is almost always admirable, although sometimes too studiously symmetrical; the figures are few and characteristic, each

speaking for itself, the impersonation of a distinct idea, and most dramatically grouped and contrasted; the attitudes are appropriate, easy, and natural, the action and gesticulation singularly vivid; the expression is excellent, except when impassioned grief induces caricature,—devoted to the study of Nature as she is, Giotto had not yet learnt that it is suppressed feeling which affects one most. The head of Our Saviour is beautiful throughout, that of the Virgin not so good; she is modest, but not very graceful or celestial,—it was long before he succeeded in his Virgins,—they are much too matronly, but, among the accessory figures, graceful female forms occasionally appear, foreshadowing those of his later works at Florence and Naples, yet they are always clumsy about the waist and bust, and most of them are under-jawed, which certainly detracts from the sweetness of the female countenance. His delineation of the naked is excellent, as compared with the works of his predecessors, but far unequal to what he attained in his later years,—the drapery, on the contrary, is noble, majestic and statuesque; the colouring is still pale and weak,—it was long ere he improved in this point; the landscape displays little or no amendment upon the Byzantine; the architecture, that of the fourteenth century, is to the figures that people it in the proportion of dolls' houses to the children that play with them,—an absurdity long unthinkingly acquiesced in, from its occurrence in the classic bas-reliefs from which it had been traditionally derived,—and, finally, the lineal perspective is very

fair, and in three of the compositions, numbers ix., x. and xi., an excellent effect is produced by the introduction of the same back-ground with varied *dramatis personæ*, reminding one of Retszch's illustrations of Faust. The animals too are always excellent, full of spirit and character.

The most striking peculiarity, however, in these frescoes, as contrasted with Giotto's later works, lies in the reverence which he appears still to have entertained for the ancient Byzantine compositions, and for the traditions of the elder Christian art; the former he seems to have wisely refrained from materially altering, in the consciousness that his wings were not as yet fully grown; the latter appear to have clung to him involuntarily, as the language of the school from which he drew his earliest instruction. These traditionary reminiscences link us with the 'Nascella' at S. Piero [illegible] foreshortening, his introduction, however inappropriate, of the "arbiter bibendi" at the feast of Cana, and most especially his new and most successful essay in allegory, do with his matured efforts in the same varied styles of thought and execution at Assisi.

It is not difficult, gazing on these silent but eloquent walls, to repeople them with the group once, as we know—five hundred years ago—assembled within them,—Giotto intent upon his work, his wife Ciuta admiring his progress, and Dante, with abstracted eye, alternately conversing with his friend and watching the gambols of the children playing on the grass before the door. It is generally affirmed

that Dante, during this visit, inspired Giotto with his taste for allegory, and that the Virtues and Vices of the Arena were the first fruits of their intercourse; it is possible certainly, but I doubt it,—allegory was the universal language of the time, as we have seen in the history of the Pisan school.

I may add in conclusion, that these frescoes of the Arena had the most signal influence on the development of the later Giotteschi in Padua and its neighbourhood, and that their merits and defects may be traced in the works of Giotto's successors there as late as the close of the fourteenth century. Whether the 'Sala del Capitolo' of the Cathedral, and the other works executed by Giotto at Padua, were painted during this first or on a later visit, I cannot say, as every vestige of them has disappeared.*

SECTION 3. *Third Period,—Giotto's works at Assisi.*

A THIRD period in Giotto's career is marked by his engagements at Assisi,† where twenty-eight large

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* Ghiberti says, "Dipinse in Padova ne' Frati Minori,"—that is, in the church of the Santo, or S. Antonio, a church of the Franciscans. Vasari says he painted "una cappella bellissima" in the Santo, by mistake probably for the Capitolo, which, according to Savonarola, (*Commentariolus de Laudibus Patavii, ap. Muratori, Ital. Rer. Scriptores*, tom. xxiv, col. 1170,) was painted by Giotto.

† According to Vasari, Giotto was invited to Assisi by Fra Muro della Marca, General of the Franciscans,—but this cannot be; at least he cannot have worked at Assisi during his generalate, since Fra Muro, elected in the middle of 1296, only ruled the order till 1302, and died at Avignon in 1312,—and from

frescoes in the Upper church, and five in the Lower, attest the variety of his powers and his continued progress to excellence. The genuineness of the former series has been disputed, but the testimony of Vasari and of tradition is explicit,* and considering their merit, and the invariable rule of the Generals of the Franciscan order to reserve their commissions for the very best artists, and to give none to mediocrity, the marvel would be—not that Giotto should, but that he should not have painted them. Moreover, they are completely in his style, not merely of execution, but of thought and invention; all his peculiar characteristics are there; the humour, especially, which first peeps out in the Arena, is still further indulged in; the foreshortenings are more numerous, while the Byzantine reminiscences have in great measure disappeared. I see no sufficient cause, therefore, for questioning their authenticity.

Giunta, as you may recollect, had painted the

Giotto's age and his engagements at Rome, Florence and Padua, all ascertained by fixed dates, it is evident he could not have worked at Assisi till after his return from Padua.

* Ghiberti's few words, "Dipinse nella chiesa di Asciesi nell' ordine de' Frati Minori quasi tutta la parte di sotto," leave one dubious as to the locality referred to. According to Vasari, Cimabue commenced the life of S. Francis, ("vi fece alcune cose,") but was summoned away, and Giotto finished it; but in the life of Giotto he attributes the whole series to him. This last statement appears to me the most trustworthy.—That the last and best of the series are Giotto's there can be little reasonable doubt. And if so, who but Giotto could have painted the earlier? The manner is not that of Cimabue, but the Giottesque.

tribune and transepts of the Upper church,—Cimabue the upper and the middle row of compartments on either side of the nave, and the corresponding space at the West end; a third space, the lowest, immediately below the string-course, had remained a blank ever since Cimabue's departure. This space was now assigned to Giotto, who filled it with a series of compositions descriptive of the life and miracles of S. Francis—which I proceed to enumerate *seriatim*, prefacing each, as in the case of the 'Arca di S. Domenico,' with a slight notice of the event it is intended to commemorate,—having purposely omitted the lives of both these Saints in my introductory Memoranda. I shall draw these notices from the life of S. Francis written by the Seraphic Doctor, S. Bonaventura, General and reformer of the order, as a popular manual of Christian holiness, and which Giotto unquestionably used as his text-book in composing the frescoes. I need only add, that the series begins at the Eastern, and is carried round, from left to right, to the Western extremity of the nave.

1. The Salutation.—S. Francis was born at Assisi in 1182, the son of one Pietro Bernardone, a rich cloth-merchant, who wished to train him to his own profession, but disinclination first, and afterwards enthusiastic devotion indisposed him to his father's wishes. Soon after his repentance a Simpleton, meeting him in the market-place of Assisi, took off his robe and spread it on the ground for him to walk over, prophesying that he was worthy of all honour, as one destined to greatness and to the veneration of

the faithful throughout the universe. It is curious to meet with the Oriental reverence for fatuity at the very threshold of the legend.*—The church represented in the fresco, although with five columns instead of six, is intended for that of the Minerva, still existing, in the piazza of Assisi, originally a heathen temple.

II. S. Francis giving his cloak to the poor officer. —Poverty, you are aware, as one of the Goddesses of Asceticism, had from the earliest ages been elevated to the rank of a Christian virtue. S. Francis worshipped her from the first with a sort of chivalric enthusiasm, styling her 'Lady Poverty,' his mother, his mistress, and his spouse. Shortly after the Salutation, and while he was meditating on its import, he met an officer of noble birth but poor and in want of necessary raiment; he took off his own cloak, and gave it him.†—This scene is represented in the valley below Assisi; Francis is on horseback,—both figures are good and expressive.

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* "Vir valde simplex, (ut creditur, eruditus a Deo,)" is Bonaventura's description of the simpleton. *S. Francisci Vita, ed. Romæ*, 4to., 1710, p. 10.—Similarly, he describes (from his own personal knowledge) Ægidius, one of S. Francis's original followers, as dwelling on the heights of contemplation, and leading a life resembling that of angels rather than men, "quanquam esset idiota et simplex." *Ibid.* p. 24.—One singular illustration of the Orientalism of mediæval Christianity may be noticed in S. Francis's reverence for paper, which he enjoined his followers to pick up and deposit in a clean place, wherever they might find any, lest peradventure the name of God, written on it, should be trodden under foot. *Ibid.* p. 96.

† *Vita*, p. 11.

III. S. Francis's Dream.—The following night, God exhibited to him in a dream a gorgeous palace ornamented with banners and coats of mail, marked with the sign of the cross; when he asked for whom they were destined, it was answered from above, "For thee and thy warriors." He started in consequence to join the army of a certain Count, then warring in Apulia, but being warned of God, in familiar wakeful converse, that he spoke of spiritual, not temporal warfare, he returned to Assisi, and gave himself up to prayer and mortification.*—The palace is represented in the fresco as of the richest Lombardo-Gothic architecture; Our Saviour stands beside the bed of S. Francis, pointing to it.

IV. The Crucifix speaks to S. Francis.—He was praying one day in the church of S. Damian, then ruinous, when a voice issued from the Crucifix, "Go, Francis, and repair my house!" Supposing that the mandate referred to the dilapidated state of the building, he saddled his horse, and taking some of his father Pietro's cloth, rode to Foligno, sold it, and brought the price to the priest, who refused to receive it from fear of Pietro, and S. Francis accordingly threw the money into a corner.†—The fresco represents him kneeling before the Crucifix, with his hands raised in astonishment at hearing it speak. This Crucifix is now preserved in the church of S. Chiara at Assisi.

V. S. Francis and his Father mutually renouncing

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* *Vita*, pp. 11 sqq. † *Vita*, p. 15.

each other in the piazza of Assisi.—Pietro, furious on discovering what had happened, put S. Francis in confinement; his mother released him, and he returned to S. Damiano; Pietro pursued him thither, but finding and regaining his money, was somewhat appeased, and brought him before the Bishop, that he might renounce his inheritance, which he did, even to the shirt upon his back, stripping himself naked before the whole city. The Bishop, astonished and delighted at his Christian heroism, gave him his own cloak, which S. Francis gratefully accepted as his first alms.*—This scene is admirably depicted; the contrast is excellent between his youthful figure, almost naked, gazing with joined hands and supplicating eyes towards heaven, from which the hand of God issues in acceptance and encouragement—and that of the father, who, with rage in his looks, and holding his son's robe on his left arm, eagerly presses forward, and is only restrained by the grasp of a friend from striking him. All the spectators are looking on and interested in the action, not mere accessary figures; two children in the left corner are an improvement upon those of the Arena.

After this, S. Francis passed a considerable period in various austerities, dwelling in desert places, attending upon lepers, and begging for religious purposes, in which he met with such success that, one after another, he rebuilt S. Damiano, S. Pietro, and S. Maria degli Angeli, his favourite retreat, named

* *Vita*, pp. 16 sqq.

so in later times from the many angelic visitations with which he was favoured. Miracles now began to be performed by his person. A native of Spoleto, afflicted with a dreadful cancer in his face, which neither medicine nor prayer had as yet removed, meeting him, and offering to kiss his feet, was anticipated by the Saint, who kissed his mouth, and the cancer was immediately healed.*—Soon afterwards,

* From this time miracles were frequently performed by or in favour of S. Francis, either parodies on those of Our Saviour and the Apostles, or else repetitions of those recorded by earlier hagiographers. When ill and in pain, he blessed water and it became wine,—preaching to the people, and stepping into a boat in order to avoid the press, it pushed off of itself, and he taught from it, and it then returned spontaneously to the shore,—devils were cast out by his word,—cures were wrought by contact with his person, or even with anything he had touched,—cattle, dying of a plague, were restored by being sprinkled with water in which his feet and hands had been washed, &c. &c. See the Life, *passim*.—Sometimes the biographer runs into absurdity from attempting to prove too much. A man had been judicially condemned for theft, and his eyes plucked out; invoking S. Francis, and declaring his innocence, within three days he received new eyes, rather smaller indeed than those he had been deprived of, but not less clear of vision. *Vita*, p. 171.—And similarly, in the case of a poor woman at Assisi, a stone left by accident on the pulpit, had fallen on her and crushed her head; she had constantly commended herself to S. Francis,—they covered her with a cloth till the sermon should be finished, when lo! she arose quite well, without a vestige of injury,—and whereas she had till then been subject to continual headache, she never had a return of it afterwards. *Ibid.* p. 154. Both these miracles indeed were performed after the Saint's death.(a)—

a I may as well subjoin the attestation to the former miracle, as given by Bonaventura:—"Hujus autem stupendi miraculi testis fuit prænominatus miles Otho," (who had directed and executed the sentence,) "juramento ad hoc adstrictus coram Domino Jacobo, Abbate S. Clementis; auctoritate Domini Jacobi Episcopi Tyburtini, de ipso miraculo in-

hearing Our Saviour's charge to the Apostles, "Possess neither gold nor silver," &c., read in the church, he abandoned the secular dress he had hitherto worn, and adopted the costume which, in its essentials, has been retained till now by his spiritual posterity. Various devotees associated themselves with him as their ghostly director, and became the germ of the order afterwards known by his name.

About this time, on a certain day, while lamenting in solitude his past delinquencies, he received, by the

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Many instances are also recorded of his prophetic foresight, his reading the heart, his knowledge of the past and future, &c. "Adeo etiam in ipso claruit spiritus prophetiæ, ut et prævideret futura et cordium contueretur occulta, absentia quoque velut præsentia cerneret, et se præsertim absentibus mirabiliter exhiberet." *Vita*, p. 99 sqq.—Instances of this are common also in the Oriental mysticism, and powers closely akin are claimed by many Christian sectarians. Parallel instances to many of these legends might be cited even from the lives of the Cameronian ministers and martyrs, the heroes of the 'Free Church.' Nothing is more certain, however startling, than that the Cameronian, the Methodist, the Quaker, the Mendicant monk, the Dervise and the Yoghi are all embarked in the same boat and under the same flag—or rather in an army of canoes privily built of wood pilfered from the Ark, and in which they have escaped from her—too often to sail out of sight and beyond return or recall from Noah.

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quirente. Testis etiàm extitit ejusdem miraculi Frater Guillermus Romanus, à patre Hieronymo Generali Ministro Ordinis Fratrum Minorum, ad veritatem dicendam, quam circa hoc noverat, præcepto et excommunicationis sententiâ obligatus. Qui taliter adstrictus, coram pluribus Ministris Provincialibus ejusdem Ordinis, et aliis magni meriti Fratribus, affirmavit se dudum, adhuc sæcularem existantem, vidisse eum habentem oculos, et postmodùm actu exsecutionis injuriam patientem; ac se excæcati oculos in terram projectos curiosè cum baculo revolvisse; et postmodùm, virtute divinâ, eundem novæ lucis receptis oculis, videntem clarissimè, conspexisse."—*Vita*, p. 171.

sudden inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the assurance of the plenary remission of them all; and, rapt above himself, and absorbed as it were in light, the destiny of himself and his order was brightly revealed to him.*

VI. The Vision of Pope Innocent III.—The number of S. Francis's votaries having increased to twelve, he wrote a rule of life for them, and journied to Rome to obtain the papal confirmation. Innocent III., who then filled the throne of the Vatican, refused to concede it, till warned of God the following night in a dream, in which he saw S. Francis (as in the parallel instance of S. Domenic) supporting with his back the church of S. John Lateran, which was ready to fall. He confirmed the rule accordingly.†—This is a very beautiful fresco; the head of S. Francis, looking up to heaven, as if for aid, is beautiful; and so is that of one of the attendants by the Pope's bedside, who has dropped his head on his arm, overcome with sleep.

VII. The Confirmation of the more extended rule by Honorius III.‡—S. Francis, accompanied by two companions, was led by the Spirit up a certain mountain, where, fasting on bread and water, he wrote as the Spirit dictated. After his return, his vicar having lost the manuscript, he reascended the mountain, and received the same over again by a second revelation. This occurred a few days only before his reception of the Stigmata; it is misplaced

* *Vita*, p. 25. † *Vita*, p. 29. ‡ *Vita*, p. 40.

here.—The Pope on his throne, surrounded by the cardinals, presents the scroll to S. Francis, who receives it on his knees,—the heads of the attendant monks are very characteristic; Giotto has caught the monastic type of countenance admirably.

VIII. S. Francis in the Chariot of Fire.—After his return to Assisi, on the night before a certain Sunday on which he was to preach, he had gone apart from the brethren to pray, but at midnight, while some were awake, others sleeping, a fiery chariot was seen to enter by the door of the house, and drive thrice round the court; a globe of light, bright as the sun and dazzling the stars, rested upon it, which they knew by supernatural illumination, (while each man's heart and conscience lay open, naked and revealed, to his neighbour,) to be the spirit of S. Francis, present among them but parted from the body—irradiated with the light and inflamed with the love of heaven, and thus shown to them by God, transfigured, in order that, like true Israelites, they should follow after him who, like another Elias, was made unto them by God both chariot and charioteer.*—The vision is well represented in Giotto's fresco: the sleeping monks are admirable, and the attempts at foreshortening not bad.

IX. The Seats prepared in heaven for S. Francis and his Order.—A large and richly ornamented chair and two small ones on either side of it appear in the sky; a monk kneels in the left corner of the

* *Vita*, p. 33.

foreground, whose attention an angel, floating in the air, directs to S. Francis, kneeling in prayer before the altar.—This legend is not mentioned by S. Bonaventura.*

x. S. Francis exorcising Arezzo.—Visiting that town, then distracted with civil strife, and perceiving, from his lodging in the suburb, the demons who stirred it up, dancing exultingly in the air above the walls, he sent Brother Sylvester, a man of dove-like simplicity, as his herald to bid them depart. Sylvester, pausing at the gate of the city, summoned them in a loud voice,—"In the name of the omnipotent God, and by the command of his servant, Francis, go out hence, every one of you!" And immediately the devils dispersed, and the city returned to peace and propriety.†—An excellent composition; S. Francis himself kneels in prayer in the left corner; Sylvester stands before the city in an attitude of noble command. Both figures are admirable.

XI. S. Francis before the Soldan.—Burning with the desire of martyrdom, "desiderio Martyrii flagrans," (like the whole series of Christian mystics from S. Antony to John Wesley,) S. Francis made three unsuccessful attempts to attain it by visiting Paynim countries and preaching Christ; the first time, he was defeated by contrary winds, the second by illness, the third, more fortunate, he reached

* There is a somewhat similar legend in the 'Vite de' SS. Padri,' lib. iii. cap. 84.

† *Vita*, p. 58.

Syria, was taken prisoner and brought before the Soldan, to whom he proclaimed the faith, and desired that the Moslem priests and himself might test the truth of their respective creeds by passing through the ordeal of fire.* The Soldan declined the offer, but was pleased with his zeal and dismissed him uninjured, and he returned to Europe.†

XII. S. Francis in Ecstasy.—Represented as seen one night by the brethren, praying, elevated from the ground, his hands extended like the cross, and surrounded by a shining cloud.‡ The Saviour bends towards him from heaven, symbolised by the segment of a circle, as in early Roman and Byzantine art.

XIII. The Mystery, or Dumb-Show, of the Nativity.—Three years before his death, S. Francis made a theatrical representation (like those still in use in Italy) of the Nativity, and preached in front of it. A certain officer affirmed that he saw, sleeping in the manger, a beautiful boy, to wit Our Saviour, who awoke on S. Francis's embracing him.§—The show takes place outside of the church; the ox and ass by the side of the manger are represented of the same size as the child, a liberty frequently taken with proportion by Giotto and the early painters. Three of the monks, in the background, yawning, are excellent.

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* Of Buddhistical or Shamanistic origin, and extremely ancient. It was thus that the Abbot Comprete offered to disprove the errors of the Manicheans. *Rosweyde, Vitæ Patrum*, p. 36.

† *Vita*, p. 87. ‡ *Vita*, p. 93. § *Vita*, p. 96.

XIV. The Miraculous Spring.—S. Francis and his monks, taking a journey over a desert mountain, where there was no water, in the heat of the summer, and their lay attendant being quite exhausted with thirst and fatigue, S. Francis dismounted from his ass, and kneeling down, prayed till he knew that he was heard, and then bade the man go to a certain rock where he should find living water, at that moment produced from the stone by Christ. There was no spring there before, says Bonaventura, and no one has been ever able to find one there since.*—The figure of the attendant, leaning on his breast and drinking, is deservedly praised by Vasari.

XV. S. Francis preaching to the Birds,—who stand on the ground or perch on the trees around him in mute attention.—Another of the Orientalisms of early Christianity. He had a passionate love for animals, whom he used to call his brothers and sisters, and the sympathy was mutual. Various anecdotes are told by S. Bonaventura in illustration of this, and of his indignation at any injury inflicted on them. One morning a sheep produced a lamb—at night a sow ate it up; "Alas!" cried he, "brother lambkin, innocent creature, true image of Christ e man! cursed be the impious wretch who hath thu maltreated thee!" The sow began to sicken imme diately, and in three days died.—A sheep having been presented to him at S. Maria degli Angeli, he

* *Vita*, p. 68.—Nearly the same story is told of S. Antony, in his life by S. Athanasius, *Opera*, tom. ii, p. 836, *edit. Benedict.*

admonished it to pay due attention to its religious duties; it came to church ever afterwards, and regularly fell on its knees at the elevation of the host. But these are individual instances only,—when he walked in the fields, the sheep would throng round and gaze up in his face; hares and rabbits, when presented to him, nestled to his bosom;* and the fish, when he ventured on their element, followed him to the shore. On one occasion, when passing by the lagunes of Venice, where vast numbers of birds were singing, he said to his companion, "Our sisters, the birds, are praising their Creator; let us too join,"—and began the canonical hours; but the noise being too great, he desired them to be silent,—they immediately ceased, and would not begin again till he gave them permission.—The subject of the present fresco is thus related by Bonaventura:—"Drawing nigh to Bevagno, he came to a certain place where a vast multitude of birds of different kinds were gathered together, whom seeing, the man of God ran hastily to the spot, and saluting them as if they had been his fellows in reason, (while they all turned and bent their heads in attentive expectation,) he admonished them, saying, 'Brother birds! greatly are ye bound to praise your Creator, who clotheth you with feathers, and giveth you wings to fly with, and a pure air to breathe in, and who careth for you who have so little care for yourselves.' While he thus spake, the little birds, marvellously commoved, began to

* *Vita*, p. 75.

spread their wings, stretch forward their necks and open their beaks, attentively gazing upon him. And he, glowing in the spirit, passed through the midst of them, and even touched them with his robe, yet not one stirred from his place, until the man of God gave them leave, when, with his blessing, and at the sign of the cross, they all flew away. These things saw his companions, who waited for him on the road. To whom returning, the simple and pure-minded man began greatly to blame himself for having never hitherto preached to the birds."*

XVI. The Death of the young Count at Celanum.—One among many instances in which the spirit of prophecy spake through S. Francis. Pressed to dine with a devout officer, and spiritually apprised of the approaching death of his host during the mental prayer he offered up before sitting down to table, he

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* *Vita*, p. 110.—I cannot refrain from adding one more of these legends, as a Christian *pendant* to the Μακαρίζομεν σε, τέττιξ, of Anacreon. "A grass-hopper (*cicada*) was wont to sit and sing on a fig-tree beside the cell of the man of God at S. Maria de Portiunculâ," (afterwards S. M. degli Angeli,) "and oft-times by her singing excited him to the praise of God. And on a certain day, on being called by him, she flew upon his hand, as if admonished thereto by heaven. And Francis saying to her, 'Sing, my sister! and praise the Lord thy Creator,' she began immediately to sing, nor ceased till at the father's command she flew back to her proper place. And she remained eight days there, coming and singing and departing day by day according to his behest. At length the man of God said to his companions, 'Let us dismiss our sister; enough that she has cheered us with her song, and excited us to the praise of God these eight days.' And so, being licensed, she immediately flew away, and never more was seen there." *Vita*, p. 78.

drew him aside and exhorted him to immediate confession, warning him that his end drew near, and that God had given him this opportunity of making his shrift in guerdon of his hospitality towards the poor of Christ. The Count confessed himself and set his house in order, and then took his place at the entertainment, but sank down and expired on the spot.*—A very interesting fresco; the young Count lies on the ground, his sister embracing his neck, his mother kneeling at his feet and tearing her cheeks, his brother clasping his hands and bending over him in mute sorrow, the guests weeping behind, S. Francis and his attendants looking on from behind the dinner-table. The story is feelingly told, although the grief runs into caricature.

XVII. S. Francis preaching before the Pope and Cardinals—all seated, in varied and appropriate attitudes, under a magnificent Gothic loggia.—I do not know to what particular event this records. Nor does the almost effaced inscription appear to imply more than that what others acquired by learning, S. Francis had by intuition, a mystic dogma fully recognised in the West from the days of S. Antony and S. Martin.†

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* *Vita*, p. 100.

† "Ad tantam autem mentis serenitatem, indefessum orationis studium, cum continuâ exercitatione virtutum, Virum Dei perduxerat; ut quamvis non habuerit Sacrarum Litterarum peritiam per doctrinam, æternæ tamen lucis irradiatus fulgoribus Scripturarum profunda miro intellectus scrutaretur acumine. Penetrabat enim ab omni labe purum ingenium mysteriorum abscondita, et ubi magistralis scientia foris stat, affectus introibat amantis." *Vita*, p. 99.

XVIII. The Apparition of S. Francis at Arles.—S. Antony of Padua was preaching at a general chapter of the order held at Arles in 1224, when S. Francis appeared in the midst, his arms extended, and in the attitude of benediction.* An excellent fresco, the attitudes, expression and air of the monks most commendable.

XIX. S. Francis receiving the Stigmata.—Long before this period, his body had been reduced by fasting, self-torture and austerities of the most dreadful description, to a mere mass of disease; his eyes were wasted by constant weeping, the "gift of tears," so coveted by the ascetics, and one of the indices to their physical temperament; his stomach and liver and nervous system were utterly destroyed; but the unquenchable spirit still bore up, and his seraphic ardours were more vivid than ever.† He was residing in this condition at the rock of Laverna, in the recesses of the Apennine, about two years before

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* *Vita*, p. 58.

† It is curious and affecting, in the lives of the ascetic Saints, to meet with passages where the whisperings of truth and common sense, and even sometimes of natural and holy affection, are misdeemed suggestions of the devil, and revenged as such by the scourge, or self-inflictions still more horrible. "One night, while at prayer," says Bonaventura, "the devil called to him thrice, and said, that there was no sinner to whom, if converted from sin, God would not show indulgence, but that whoever killed himself with unmeasured penance would find no mercy throughout eternity. But immediately," proceeds the narrative, "he knew the ancient enemy, &c."—S. Francis used to call his body, 'Brother Ass,' and say it was to be subdued, and its spirit broken down, like its brutal prototype.

his death, when on a certain morning, while in an ecstasy of prayer, the Saviour appeared to him, with his arms extended as on the cross, between the wings of a seraph, descending from heaven; pity passed through his heart like a sword, and a supernatural sympathy visibly and indelibly imprinted the wounds of the Crucified upon his person, on his feet, hands and sides. After this infliction his hands acquired a peculiar and restorative warmth and virtue. "The heads of the nails," says S. Bonaventura, "were round and black, their points oblong, twisted and as it were bent back, rising above the flesh. The wound in the side had the appearance of a red cicatrice, which frequently emitted blood."*

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* *Vita*, pp. 119, sqq.—S. Bonaventura's words, describing the Stigmata, are as follows:—"Statimque namque in manibus ejus et pedibus apparere cœperunt signa clavorum: quemadmodum paulò ante in effigie illâ viri Crucifixi conspexerat. Manus enim et pedes, in ipso medio, clavis confixæ videbantur: clavorum capitibus in interiori parte manuum et superiori pedum apparentibus, et eorum acuminibus existentibus ex adverso. Erantque clavorum capita in manibus et pedibus rotunda et nigra: ipsa vero acumina oblonga, retorta et quasi repercussa, quæ de ipsâ carne surgentia, carnem reliquam excedebant. Dexterum quoque latus, quasi lanceâ transfixum, rubrâ cicatrice obductum erat: quod sæpe sanguinem sacrum effundens, tunicam et femoralia respergebat."—And, describing the appearance of his body after death:—"Erat autem similitudo clavorum nigra quasi ferrum: vulnus autem lateris rubeum, et ad orbicularitatem quandam carnis contractione reductum, rosa tanquam pulcherrima videbatur. Caro verò ipsius reliqua, quæ prius tam ex infirmitate quam ex naturâ, ad nigredinem declinabat, candore nimio renitescens, illius secundæ stolæ pulchritudinem prætendebat. Membra ipsius adeò mollia et tractabilia se præbebant palpantibus, ut conversa viderentur in teneritudinem puerilis ætatis et

—It seems almost doubtful whether the expressions of the biographer imply real nails or the appearance only. But that the wounds actually existed during S. Francis's life there can be no question,* although Catholics and Protestants, and such as view the Christianity of the middle ages with Oriental eyes, will account for their infliction very differently. But the question of religious ecstasy (apart from stigmatisation) is not one for summary dismissal under the plea of imposture; the whole subject ought to be carefully investigated in a scientific point of view,—this very 'Life of S. Francis,' for instance, as written by Bonaventura, would furnish most curious *data* for such a purpose.† Nor, even were all these miracles admitted as fact, would they tell in favour of Catholicism, for the exhibition of such, whether real or pretended, in support of doctrines inimical to those of S. Paul, is an express mark of spiritual apostacy revealed for our guidance by that Apostle. The Estaticas, &c. of the Tyrol and elsewhere, are

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quibusdam cernerentur evidentibus signis innocentiæ decorata. Cùm igitur in candidissimâ carne clàvi nigrescerent; plaga verò lateris, ut vernans roseus flos rubuit; mirandum non est si tam formosa et miraculosa varietas jucunditatem et admirationem contuentibus ingerebat." *Vita*, p. 135.

* "Summus etiàm Pontifex Dominus Alexander (IV.) cùm populo prædicaret, coram multis fratribus et me ipso affirmavit se, dum Sanctus viveret, stigmata illa sacra suis oculis conspexisse." *Vita*, p. 124.

† M. Alfred Maury, author of the 'Essai sur les Légendes Pieuses du Moyen-age,' is occupied upon a work on the subject of Stigmatisation.

thus the strongest possible Scriptural argument against Popery, as the non-pretension to miracles is in favour—I will not say, of Protestantism, narrowed and crippled as the word has been in recent controversy—but of the Church of England. If real, they are permitted as a trial of our faith,—for it will eventually, I am confident, become an established maxim, that as witnesses of God to the true Church, wherever she exists, miracles diminish or increase in proportion to the development of intellect and the powers of abstraction.—But to return to Assisi and proceed to

XX. The Death of S. Francis.—Two years had elapsed since receiving the stigmata; he had long been unable to walk on account of the excrescence of the nails in his feet; his strength too was completely gone, and he was removed, a mere living corpse, to S. Maria degli Angeli. He caused himself to be laid naked on the ground in the secret hope that he might once more, in that dying hour, become the object of charity. A brother, whom he had chosen as his superior, in order to keep his obedience in exercise, divined the wish, and bringing a robe and cord, presented them to him as to the 'pauper of Christ,' commanding him, by his vow of obedience, to accept them as alms. Thus S. Francis rejoiced greatly, and gave God thanks that even to the last he had kept inviolate his plighted faith to his beloved Lady Poverty. He then, crossing his arms, blessed his children, taking leave of them, and exhorting them to patience, poverty and faith in the

holy Roman Church. "And thus, at length, all mysteries having been accomplished in him, and his most holy soul being freed from the flesh and absorbed into the abyss of the light of God, (in abyssum divinæ claritatis absorptâ,) the blessed man fell asleep in the Lord."*—Peaceful and still is the parting scene, as depicted by Giotto. He is stretched out dead, surrounded by monks and priests with censers and candles,—his soul carried up by angels to heaven. The composition is copious and beautiful, but the compartment, like most of those which follow, the last and best, alas! of the series, has been sadly injured by damp.

XXI. The Dying Friar.—A brother of the order, lying on his death-bed, saw the spirit of S. Francis rising to heaven, and springing forward, cried, "Tarry, father! I come with thee," and fell back dead.†—Almost effaced.

XXII. The Scepticism of Jerome.—The people of Assisi being admitted to see and kiss the stigmata, one Jerome, sceptical like S. Thomas, audaciously touched and moved the nails; the hands, feet and side shrunk and contracted as if with pain.‡—He is represented kneeling and touching the side, the dead brow frowning with anguish; the monks and priests stand round with candles, &c.

XXIII. The Lament at S. Damiano.—The crowd, bearing the body to Assisi, with boughs of trees,

* *Vita*, pp. 130, sqq.

† This legend is not told by Bonaventura.

‡ *Vita*, p. 136.

torches and hymns, halted at the church of S. Damiano, where S. Clara and her nuns, of the third order instituted by S. Francis, then resided, and yielded it to be seen and kissed by them.*—Modified from the Byzantine Pietà, and full of deep and sweet feeling. Restraint is lost in their distress, the gentlemen present are unthought of; they are all unveiled, some of them beautiful. S. Clara leans over, embracing the body, another kisses his hand, others gaze from behind, all in sorrow, but no longer caricatured, deep but subdued.

XXIV. S. Francis's Canonisation. — Almost destroyed. If, as appears probable, that ceremony is represented here, and not the temporary burial in S. Giorgio, it is misplaced, having been preceded by the Vision, which forms the subject of the following fresco:—

XXV. The Vision of Pope Gregory IX.—He hesitated, before canonising S. Francis, doubting the celestial infliction of the stigmata. S. Francis appeared to him in a vision, and with a severe countenance reproving his unbelief, opened his robe and exposing the wound in his side, filled a vial with the blood that flowed from it, and gave it to the Pope, who awoke and found it in his hand.†—Admirably composed and full of expression; the involuntary action of the Pope's arm is excellent. These sleeping figures of Giotto, and this in particular, remind one of the Apparition of S. Cecilia to Pope Pascal,

* *Vita*, p. 137. † *Vita*, p. 141.

the old Greek fresco in the church of that Saint at Rome.

XXVI. The Cure of the Catalonian.—He had been mortally wounded by robbers,—his wounds stunk, he had been given over by the pnysician; invoking S. Francis, the Saint entered from the window, touched his wounds with the stigmatised hands, and healed him.*—Most expressive; the physician stands at the foot of the bed, about to take his leave, shrugging his shoulders in reply to the entreaties of the friends who urge his stay; while S. Francis, in his friar's robe, and attended by two angels, performs the cure.

XXVII. The Confession after Death.—A woman of Monte Marino, near Benevento, had died unshriven, but having been devoted to S. Francis, her spirit was permitted, through his intercession, to return and reanimate the body while she confessed and received absolution.†—No less beautiful than the preceding compartment; the woman, ghastly and white, sits up in her bed, confessing to the trembling priest, whose attendants stand at the foot, and the weeping relatives at the head, their grief a little caricatured; an angel hovers above her, awaiting the final release of the soul, while a devil, disappointed, flies away. S. Francis's intercession, and Our Saviour extending his right hand towards him in acceptance, are represented in the upper corner to the right.

XXVIII. S. Francis the Vindicator of Innocence,—

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* *Vita*, p. 143. † *Vita*, p. 147.

in the case of a Bishop, his devotee, who had been falsely accused of heresy.*—Admirably composed, and full of expression and character; the Bishop's Cathedral is seen to the left, the prison to the right; in the midst he kneels praying; a priest behind him holds the crosier of which he has been deprived, the gaoler steps forward with the manacles, the guards that have brought him deliver him to his custody. Above, S. Francis is seen floating in the sky, and interceding for him.

The preceding details, read apart from the frescoes on which they are a commentary, may have appeared rather tedious, but you will find them, I trust, useful on the spot, in examining them. You ought also to be familiar with the spirit as well as the historical outline of the legend.

But to complete the series, to sum up the moral of the whole, we must descend from the Upper to the Lower church, and examine the four large and most beautiful compositions which adorn the groined vault that bends over the tomb of S. Francis.

The subjects were probably suggested by a vision recorded as follows by S. Bonaventura. "Journeying to Siena, in a broad plain between Campiglia and S. Quirico, S. Francis was encountered by three maidens in poor raiment, and exactly resembling each other in age and appearance, who saluted him

* Rather different from Bonaventura's version of the story, for which see *Vita*, p. 163.

with the words, 'Welcome, Lady Poverty!' and suddenly disappeared. The brethren not irrationally concluded that this apparition imported some mystery pertaining to S. Francis, and that by the three poor maidens were signified Chastity, Obedience, and Poverty, the beauty and sum of Evangelical Perfection, all of which shone with equal and consummate lustre in the man of God, although he preferred to glory in the privilege of Poverty."* Each step in the Ascetic ladder is accordingly here celebrated in a distinct compartment, and their triumph and glorification by that of S. Francis in the fourth and concluding one, which fills the place of honour, towards the East. They are compositions of extreme interest, both as works of art, and as illustrating the Christianity of the cloister. We will begin with the First, or Northern compartment, inscribed, in Gothic letters,

Sancta Castitas.

From the centre of a fortress, situated on a rock and defended by battlements and palisadoes, rises a lofty tower, within which, through a window, appears Chastity, as a young maiden, praying, while two angels, floating in the air, present to her, the one a palm-branch, the other a volume, probably the Bible.—In the foreground, outside and in front of the fortress, is represented the rite of Christian

* *Vita*, p. 65.—A very pretty picture of this Vision, in the possession of Count Demidoff, is engraved in Rosini, *Storia*, &c. tav. 25.

baptism. A youth is half immersed in the font; the angel 'Purity' pours the water on his head, 'Fortitude' dries him; a third holds his garments; a fourth, leaning over the palisadoes, offers him from within the fortress the banner of the cross. On either side of this group, as if ready to defend the castle against a world in arms, stands a warrior with hand on sword and shield on arm—the one shield bearing, as its device, a royal, the other an imperial crown, from which these personages are supposed to represent the Emperor S. Henry and Boleslaus King of Poland, both of whom are said to have united virginity with marriage.—In the angle to the left, S. Francis welcomes three men who ascend the hill, ambitious of leading the 'angelical life;' in that to the right, 'Penance,' winged, but in an anchoret's robe, and accompanied by various figures armed with scourge, staff, and cross, drives the World, the Flesh, and the Devil down the precipice of hell; Satan, fallen backwards, is just disappearing,—Cupid, a lean scarecrow, with bow, quiver and fillet, and feet ending in claws, looks ruefully round as he is pushed down the declivity; and the World, (for it would seem to be such rather than Death,) in the shape of a skeleton, more in the background, is about to follow.

This fresco needs little comment. I need not remind you that the Chastity thus commended is that which brands our wives and mothers with a slur—nor dwell on the melancholy consequences to human virtue and happiness entailed by the fatal and most

unscriptural restriction of the idea and the term to Virginity and Celibacy,—a delusion of most ancient date, and inherited alike by the Mystics of the East and the West, the Buddhists and the Gnostics,—the latter of whom, more especially, referred the origin of sin to the creation of matter, the creation of matter to the Evil Principle—and identified that Evil Principle with Jehovah!—S. Francis shared to the full in the agonies of the early ascetics,*—it is a subject that can but be alluded to—May God in his mercy shield us from such horrors in England!

The Second of these Evangelical virtues is allegorised in the compartment opposite to the preceding, inscribed,

Sancta Obedientia.

Under the columned loggia, or porch, of a church, and in front of the crucifix, Obedience, represented by an angel robed in black, and placing the finger of his left hand on his mouth, passes the yoke over the head of a Franciscan monk kneeling at his feet, who also assists in the operation; two others accompany him, to whom an angel seems to say, 'Follow his example!' Obedience is supported on his right hand by Prudence, on his left by Humility. Angels kneel to the right and left, one of whom, to the right, appears to repulse a Centaur, standing without the porch, whose hind feet, ending in claws, betray Satan under his character of Pride. On the roof of

* *Vita*, p. 43.

the loggia, attended to the right and left by two kneeling angels, stands in his monastic robe S. Francis, above whose head the two hands of the Deity appear from heaven, dropping (apparently) the knotted cord of the Franciscans.

The sense entertained of this virtue by S. Francis cannot be better illustrated than by his own comparison of the true Son of Obedience to a dead body.* He followed out the theory unflinchingly himself, to a complete crushing of all self-respect and individuality. To this end, as I have already intimated, he required that a ruler or guardian should be placed over him, to whose will he might be entirely subject as a slave to his master. And hence, moreover, his selection of the title 'Fratres Minores,' for his new fraternity.—But not a doubt can rest on his own genuine humility and sincerity in his creed. It is evinced by one of the most pleasing anecdotes in his life. The Bishop of Imola had refused him leave to preach there, and with harshness, saying, "It sufficeth, brother, that I preach to my own people." S. Francis bent his head and departed, but presently

* "Cùm vero vice quadam quæreretur ab eo, quis esset verus obediens judicandus, corporis mortui similitudinem pro exemplo proposuit. Tolle, inquit, corpus exanime, et ubi placuerit pone: videbis non repugnare motum, non murmurare situm, non reclamare dimissum. Quòd si statueretur in cathedrâ, non alta sed ima respiciet. Si collocetur in purpurâ, duplo pallescet. Hic, ait, verus obediens est, qui cur moveatur, non dijudicat; ubi locetur non curat; ut transmutetur non instat; evictus ad officium solitam tenet humilitatem. Plus honoratus, plus reputat se indignum." *Vita*, p. 54.

re-entered and preferred his petition anew. "Why dost thou thus trouble me?" said the Bishop. "Because," replied S. Francis, "a son driven out at one door from a father's presence will re-enter by the other." The Bishop was touched, and embracing him, gave him full licence to preach throughout his diocese.*

But the loftiest and noblest of the Christian virtues, far transcending even Chastity or Obedience, and beyond all others the crown and glory of S. Francis, is,

Sancta Paupertas,

the 'Lady Poverty' of his spiritual chivalry, to whom he is here represented as married by Christ.

The scene is a rocky wilderness. Poverty stands in the midst, emaciated, bare-footed, in a tattered robe, her feet among thorns, which a youth is thrusting against her with a staff, while another throws stones, and a dog barks at her. She is attended by Hope and Charity as bridesmaids, herself being thus substituted for Faith; S. Francis places the ring on her finger, while Our Saviour standing between them, at once gives away the bride and pronounces the nuptial benediction. Angels and other figures attend to the right and left. In the left corner, at the bottom of the fresco, S. Francis is represented, in youth, giving his robe to the poor officer, and at the opposite extremity, three men in rich robes, one holding a purse, the other a falcon,

* *Vita*, p. 57.

represent probably the secular benefactors of the order. In the sky, at the top of the composition, and in reference to the corners thus referred to, the Deity bends from heaven, and two angels present to Him, the one the robe S. Francis had given the officer, the other the model of a church or convent, probably this of Assisi, with a star shining on it.

Like Dante, whose beautiful allusion in the Paradiso is supposed to have suggested this fresco,* Giotto, I have little doubt, adopted its leading idea from a passage in the life by Bonaventura, which I here subjoin, as in every way curious and instructive. "Re-

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* "Chè per tal donna giovanetto in guerra
Del padre corse, a cui, com' alla morte,
La porta del piacer nessun disserra:
E dinanzi alla sua spirital corte,
Et coram patre le si fece unito,
Poscia di dì in dì l' amò più forte.
Questa, privata del primo marito,
Mille e cent' anni e più dispetta e scura
Fino a costui si stette senza invito:—
* * * *
Ma perch' io non proceda troppo chiaro,
Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti
Prèndi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso."(a)

(a) "A dame, to whom none openeth pleasure's gate
More than to death was, 'gainst his father's will,
His stripling choice, and he did make her his
Before the spiritual court by nuptial bonds,
And in his father's sight, from day to day
Then loved her more devoutly. She bereaved
Of her first husband, slighted and obscure,
Thousand and hundred years and more, remained
Without a single suitor, till he came.
But not to deal
Thus closely with thee longer, take at large
The lovers' titles, Poverty and Francis."
Cary's Translation, Canto xi.

garding Poverty as the familiar of the Son of God, although repulsed as it were from the whole earth, he so coveted to espouse her with a perpetual love, that he not only left father and mother for her sake, but dispersed and scattered abroad all that he had. Never was any one so enamoured of gold as Francis of Poverty, never any more avaricious of treasure than he of this pearl of the gospel. Often with tears did he call to mind the poor estate of Christ and his mother, from thence arguing Poverty to be the Queen of virtues, inasmuch as it shone with such effulgence in the King of Kings and in the Queen his mother. For when the brethren in conclave asked him what virtue rendered man most dear to Christ, he answered, opening as it were the very secret of his heart,* 'Poverty, my brethren! Poverty is the special way of salvation,'—as being the cherisher of humility and root of perfection, whose fruit is manifold yet occult. For this is the 'treasure hidden in the field' of the gospel, for buying which all things are to be sold, and such things as cannot be parted with are to be despised and counted as nought in comparison with it. 'The man,' said he, 'who wishes to attain this point of exaltation, ought not only after a manner to renounce worldly prudence, but even knowledge of letters, so that, self-denuded of all things, he may enter into the power of the Lord, and may offer himself naked to the arms of the Crucified; for no one perfectly renounces the world

* *Vita*, p. 61.

who reserves the coffer of his own reason within the secret of his heart.' "—Principles, of which the practical effect in deadening and confounding all natural affection and justice, is strongly exemplified in the reproof addressed by S. Francis to a person who joined the order, but bequeathed his property to his relations, "Thou hast given thy property to thy kindred and defrauded the poor!" *

It was not therefore merely from the reaction consequent on the luxury of the Church, but from the belief of the intrinsic meritorious holiness of Poverty, that it became impressed as their peculiar law and characteristic on the orders emphatically termed Mendicant in the Latin, and Beghards, or Beggars, in the Teutonic dialects of Europe.

In Poverty, as in Obedience, S. Francis practised as he preached. It was his maxim that bread gained by begging was better than that offered in alms, and that the text, "Man ate the bread of angels," was thus fulfilled in the "pauperes Christi." And he illustrated this by his own example, when on a certain occasion at Easter, residing in a remote hermitage, and finding no one else to beg from, he begged of his brethren.†

Finally,—turning to the East, we discern the union, concentration, reward and recompense of the three Evangelical virtues in the Triumph or Apotheosis of the hero of this singular history, the

Gloriosus Franciscus.

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* *Vita*, p. 63. † *Vita*, p. 66.

—He is seated in a triumphal chair, holding the cross in one hand and a roll or book in the other, the rule probably of his order, and surrounded by angels who celebrate his praises with trump and song; while above his head is suspended from heaven a shield or banner, on which is depicted a cross, surrounded by seven small crosslets or stars, representing perhaps the 'seven spirits of God.' Apparently the whole cortège is rising to heaven.*

I have anticipated the greater number of the remarks I should otherwise have made upon these

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* Engravings of the four frescoes just described, after drawings by Signor Mariani, may be found among the plates to Fea's 'Descrizione della Sagrosanta Patriarcal Basilica, &c. di Assisi,' *Roma*, fol. 1820.—The S. Francis receiving the Stigmata, on the Eastern wall of the North transept in the Lower church, is also by Giotto; it was his last and best work there, according to Vasari.(a)

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[a] Giotto also painted, according to Ghiberti, in the (ancient) church of S. Maria degli Angeli, long since destroyed. Let me subjoin the following admirable observations by M. Rio on the merits of the life of S. Francis as a subject for Christian art:—"Ce fut encore ce mystérieux instinct de l'art dont nous avons parlé ailleurs, qui le guida dans son choix. Nulle biographie de martyr ou de père du désert ne se prêtait mieux que celle de S. François au développement du genre de mérite que la peinture se propose plus spécialement d'atteindre, l'expression poétique des affections profondes de l'âme. Dans cette vie si pleine et si merveilleuse, il y a très peu d'actions extérieures, très peu d'épisodes dramatiques; ce sont tout simplement des vertus évangéliques bien humbles et bien paisibles, mais dont la pratique austère a la propriété de faire briller une sorte de transfiguration sur le visage de ceux qui s'y sont voués. L'humilité dans son modeste maintien, l'amour dans ses sublimes extases, ne sauraient être représentés d'une manière satisfaisantes que par la peinture."—*De la Poésie Chrétienne*, p. 70; a work graceful, eloquent and appreciative, and calculated to make enthusiasts in the cause of the 'Ecole Mystique,' exclusively of all other excellence.

frescoes of Assisi. Giotto's characteristic merits, as already noticed in the chapel of the Arena, are here displayed in a degree only surpassed by his still maturer productions at Naples and Florence,—for his genius was progressive even unto the end. His colouring is richer, his design is purer, his female forms are more graceful, his invention is more fertile, his composition more profound, while his mind, especially as exhibited in the great frescoes of the Lower Church, has taken a giant's stride. Between the first and the last of the life of S. Francis there is certainly a great distance in point of excellence,—it is possible that they may have been executed at distinct, though not, I think, very remote intervals. But between the last of the Upper Church and the four of the Lower, the transition, in point of time and merit, is (to myself at least) imperceptible.

At all events, I think there can be little doubt that the whole, or the greater part of the two series, was executed between the frescoes of the Arena on the one hand and those of Avignon and Naples on the other; and that therefore I am justified in appropriating to them a distinct period in Giotto's history. Their actual date I am not able to determine.*

* According to Vasari, Giotto painted, on his journey to Assisi, the fresco figures of S. Francis and S. Domenic, still remaining, on the last pillar of the Northern aisle in S. Giorgio, the Pieve or parish-church of Arezzo. And he mentions other paintings by Giotto, executed subsequently in the Duomo, which have perished.

SECTION 4.—*Fourth Period: Works at Florence, in the North of Italy, at Avignon and Naples.*

THE interval between Giotto's return from Assisi and his final settlement at Florence, which I have distinguished as the Fourth period in his career, was perhaps the most active of all, though most of the works he then executed have perished. It embraces (as I conceive) a lengthened residence at Florence, in the first instance,—a second and more extensive tour through the North of Italy, where he painted at Ferrara, Verona, Ravenna, and possibly again at Padua,—and, finally, successive and prolonged visits to Avignon and Naples. The dates of the latter expeditions are pretty well ascertained, but of those that preceded them I can speak but very doubtfully.

As works unquestionably of Giotto's maturity, yet necessarily to be dated as early as possible consistently with probability, I shall first specify the Coronation of the Virgin in the church of S. Croce at Florence, and the series of small compositions from the lives of S. Francis and of Our Saviour, painted on the wardrobe of the Sacristy, now broken up and preserved separately in the Academy.

The Coronation is the altar-piece of the chapel of the Baroncelli family, at the extremity of the Southern transept; it is one of Giotto's best works in tempera, —the Virgin very sweet, the heads of the angels good, and the colouring peculiarly soft and clear; it is a very charming picture, and (in the common

phrase) grows on one exceedingly.* So do the little pictures in the Academy; they were originally twenty-six in number, each event in the Saviour's history being paralleled by one in that of S. Francis;† but four of the series devoted to the life of the Saint have been lost, and from those which remain I should have supposed them earlier than the frescoes at Assisi.‡

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* I must again avail myself of M. Rio's remarks on this picture:—"Cet ouvrage contient, pour ainsi dire, un abrégé de toutes les innovations que Giotto avait disséminées dans les autres. L'enfant Jésus n'est plus le même ni pour le caractère, ni pour le costume; le type primitif, encore reconnaissable dans Duccio et Cimabué, a totalement disparu; les anges des quatre compartimens sont charmans pour la variété et pour la grâce; mais il a répudié le costume adopté par ses devanciers, et pour rendre la différence plus tranchante, il leur a mis des instrumens de musique entre les mains. Le progrès positif (a) indiqué par ce tableau, consiste principalement dans la partie technique et dans le coloris qui est beaucoup plus clair et plus transparent qu'il ne l'avait été jusqu'alors dans l'école de Florence, et surtout dans celle de Sienne, où il y avait quelque chose de plus plombé dans les ombres et de plus jaunâtre dans la lumière." *De la Poésie Chrétienne*, p. 68.

† See Kugler's Handbook, p. 54.—But this is nothing to the gigantic system of parallelism established between S. Francis and Our Saviour in the 'Opus auree et inexplicabilis bonitatis et continentie, Conformitatum scilicet vite Beati Francisci ad vitam D. nostri Jesu Christi,' *Mediol.* fol. 1513,—a very singular work, compiled towards the close of the fourteenth century by Bartolommeo of Pisa, a Franciscan friar.

‡ They represent S. Francis and his father mutually re-

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[a] "Il est important de ne pas perdre de vue la distinction que j'établis entre le mérite positif de Giotto et son mérite négatif, qui consiste dans la distinction de certains types supérieurs à bien des égards à ce qu'il y a substitué lui-même, mais incompatibles avec les belles destinées qui attendaient l'art Chrétien moderne. Cette incompatibilité semble avoir entièrement échappé à Rumohr, à plus forte raison à tous les écrivains qui l'ont précédé dans ce genre de recherches."—*Ibid.*

On the other hand, the compositions from the New Testament are so masterly and original, and the Byzantine traditions are in many instances so boldly and happily departed from, that I feel no doubt of their being of later date.—They are briefly as follows:—

I. The Visitation,—S. Elizabeth, at the door of her house, kneeling to the Virgin.

II. The Nativity.—The shed, the cow and the ass are retained, but the Virgin is represented kneeling and uncovering the infant Saviour to the gaze of S. Joseph, (no longer moodily sitting in the corner, but kneeling with his hands joined,) and to the shepherds, two in number and admirably characterised, the one absorbed in the spectacle before him, the other appearing to be interested in it chiefly through the impression made on his companion.—A very great improvement on the Byzantine composition, and the germ apparently of the exquisite Nativities or *Presepes*, as they are usually termed in Italy, of Perugino and the Umbrian school, probably adopted originally from this very picture.*

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nouncing each other; S. Francis receiving the rule of the order,—preaching before the Pope,—in the Chariot of Fire,—his theatrical 'Presepe,' or dumb-show of the Nativity,—his apparition at the Chapter of Arles,—his reception of the Stigmata, and his Intercession.

* *Vide supra*, tom. i, p. 87.—"She humbly bowed her knees, in the posture and guise of worshippers, and in the midst of glorious thoughts and highest speculations, brought forth her first-born into the world. As there was no sin in the conception, so neither had she pains in the production, as the Church, from the days of Gregory Nazianzen until now, hath piously believed." *Bp. Jeremy Taylor*, (who in fact seems to hold the

III. The Adoration of the Kings.

IV. The Presentation in the Temple.—Nearly the same composition as at Padua, but with the introduction of the High Priest and the substitution of the temple for the mere isolated altar. The composition extremely simple and concentrated.

V. The Dispute in the Temple.—Our Saviour has paused to listen to his mother, who has just come in, followed by S. Joseph, and is represented speaking to him and gesticulating with her hands; none of the Doctors perceive the interruption, so engrossed is their attention; their attitudes and varied expression are admirable.

VI. The Baptism of Christ.—Varied from the Byzantine composition, two Apostles, S. Andrew and S. John, both of them disciples originally of the Baptist, (*John* i. 35.) holding the robe of Our Saviour, by substitution for the angels. The face of S. John is young and beautiful; S. Andrew wears the colours usually attributed to his brother, S. Peter.

VII. The Transfiguration.—Modified, like the preceding composition, inasmuch as Moses and Elias kneel, on either side of Our Saviour.

VIII. The Last Supper.

IX. The Crucifixion.—The simplest form of this composition, the Crucifix attended to the right and left by the Virgin and S. John. Subdued grief, not caricatured.

Valentinian doctrine,) *Life of Christ*, *Works*, tom. i, p. 20, edit. Heber.

x. The Resurrection.—Our Saviour, holding the banner of the cross, rising floatingly from the sepulchre; two guards are stretched as dead men in front of it.

xi. The 'Noli me tangere.'—Very simple and beautiful, the head of Our Saviour full of sweet majesty. A palm-tree in the centre of the composition.

xii. The Incredulity of S. Thomas.—Our Saviour and Thomas stand in the midst of the Apostles, who kneel around them in various attitudes; Thomas puts his finger into the wound, while Our Saviour looks down on him, and points upward.—Full of mystical beauty. The hair of S. Peter is represented with the triple tire of the old mosaics.

The thirteenth and last of the series, representing the Descent of the Holy Spirit, is now—like "water parted from the sea"—at Berlin; it preserves the old Byzantine outline unchanged.

These compositions are simple and beautiful, the figures few, and each (as usual with Giotto) expressive of a peculiar emotion; the heads are varied, that of Our Saviour is sometimes very lovely; the action is dignified and appropriate throughout, and the colouring pleasing, but the landscape as rude as ever.—The influence of these little pictures is visible through the whole subsequent development of the Florentine school.

To this period may also be assigned the Agony in the Garden—a picture full of calm and repressed, but deep feeling, and the type, if I mistake not, of

many later compositions*—now in the gallery of the Uffizj; the Crucifix in the chapel of the North transept of the Ognissanti, the type of which, distinguished by there being only one nail in the feet of Our Saviour, was certainly adopted by Giotto subsequent to his works in the Arena,† and propagated throughout Italy by his school;‡ the S. Francis receiving the Stigmata, once at Pisa, now at Paris,—full of awe and devotion, and although signed without the prefix 'Magister,' certainly of later date than the Arena by the same argument of the single nail in the feet of the Crucifix;§ the Burial of the Virgin,

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* The two small compositions of the predella, the Betrayal and the Mockery of Our Saviour, are full of originality; in the former, Peter, kneeling on Malchus, and having secured his ear with his left hand, and prepared his knife, turns round to Our Saviour as if for orders; in the other S. John attempts to console the Virgin, to the left of the composition, while on the right, a man plants the cross in the ground, in an attitude that attests Giotto's observation of common nature.

† Where in the Crucifixion each foot is separately nailed, according to ancient Roman usage and the Byzantine tradition.

‡ Crucifixes by Giotto, painted after the same type, are preserved in the sacristy of S. Croce, and in the churches of S. Marco and S. Maria Novella at Florence, in S. Maria in Minerva at Rome, and in the left aisle of the Badia di S. Flora (or di Fiore, as the people call it) at Arezzo. According to Vasari, Capanna worked with Giotto on those preserved in S. Maria Novella and the Ognissanti, and adopting the design, multiplied them all over Italy after Giotto's death.

§ Vasari praises the landscape, which however exhibits but very little improvement. The three small subjects of the predella represent S. Francis supporting the Lateran, receiving the rule of the order, and preaching to the birds. The inscription is 'Opus Jocti Florentini.' On his omission of the title 'Magister' see *supra*, p. 179 *note*.—The following are the observations

in the Academy at Pisa, a very beautiful variation of the Byzantine composition,*—and, in fresco, the 'Storia della Fede Cristiana,' an allegorical composition in the Palazzo della Parte Guelfa, which, with others by his hand in that edifice, has long since perished.†—And if the frescoes in the Refectory of S. Croce be his, (and their merit is such that it is almost impossible to doubt his having at least furnished the designs,) they must fall within this same period, S. Louis of Toulouse, who is represented seated beside the Tree of the Cross, having been beatified in 1317, and they were probably painted soon afterwards.‡

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of M. Bernhard on this picture in his memoir of Giotto in the 'Biographie Universelle:'—"La fermeté et l'expression de la tête du Saint, qui est de grandeur naturelle; les plis larges et faciles de la draperie, évidemment dessinée sur la nature; la vérité et la transparence des tons; la finesse de la touche; le choix même des formes, assez remarquable sur la poitrine du Sauveur, ont également droit de nous étonner dans ce tableau précieux."—He further notices the "vivacité du coloris, naïveté, variété des attitudes, justesse de l'expression, entente déjà judicieuse de la composition pittoresque," in the three compartments of the predella.

* Instead of Our Saviour receiving the soul of the Virgin in his arms, her reception by God in heaven is represented in the extreme background. This differs from the Burial praised by Vasari and stolen from the church of Ognissanti in the time of Vasari, as described by that writer. See engravings of paintings of this subject attributed to Giotto, in the 'Etruria Pittrice,' tav. 9, and in Rosini, tav. 14.

† "E nel palagio della parte e una storia della fede Cristiana, e molte altre cose erano in detto palagio." *Ghiberti.*—"Una storia della Fede Cristiana, dipinta perfettamente." *Vasari.*

‡ The central and principal subject represents the 'Lignum Vitæ, in medio Paradisi, afferens fructus XII,' and casting out

Lastly, I may mention once more the Resurrection of Lazarus and the 'Noli me tangere,' in the chapel of the Bargello, as certainly belonging to Giotto's best time; the former is the improvement and perfection of the composition at Padua, the Saviour full of majesty, and the original evidently of Masaccio's S. Peter in the celebrated chapel at the Carmine; the Magdalen, on the other hand, in the 'Noli me tangere,' is one of the sweetest creations of the fourteenth century,—the lip most winningly beautiful, beaming with rapture and love.

Of the works executed by Giotto during his second tour in Lombardy I can, alas! say nothing; not a fragment remains of them—all have been swept away.* I pass, therefore, without further delay, to

branches or scrolls to the right and left, terminating in the twelve prophets, and inscribed with monkish rhymes declaring the attributes and sufferings of Christ. The Holy Spirit descends on Our Saviour, and the pelican feeds her young on the top of the tree; S. Francis embraces its foot, S. Louis sits beside it writing, the Virgin fainting is supported by S. John to the left. To the right and left of this central compartment are four smaller ones, and below it a fifth and large one,—the uppermost to the left representing S. Francis receiving the stigmata, the one below that, a subject I do not understand; the uppermost to the right the apparition of Our Saviour to S. Romanus, with S. Benedict at the mouth of his cave pulling up his food, and the devil flinging the stone at the bell by which he was wont to signify his wants; the fourth, S. Mary Magdalen anointing Our Saviour's feet; the fifth and lowest of all, the Last Supper—the figures full of solemn dignity and beauty,—Judas sitting outside, dipping in the dish, John lying on Our Saviour's lap. The colouring in all is very white and pale,—these frescoes are painted over another previously existing fresco, and Von Rumohr and Förster assign them to the latter half of the fourteenth century.

* According to Vasari, he painted at Verona for Can Grande

his residence and employment at the Papal court of Avignon.

The date of this visit may be fixed, I think, in 1323 or 1324, before which time the palace in which he painted could hardly have been ready for his pencil.* He executed many works there, of which

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della Scala, and at Ferrara for the D'Estes, whence, invited through the recommendation of Dante, he went to Ravenna. If this last statement be true, it must have been in 1320 or 1321, when Dante was resident there. But if the frescoes now shown at Ravenna as Giotto's be really his, they belong to a much earlier period. See *note*, p. 180 *supra*.—Vasari cites a picture at Lucca, as painted for Castruccio Castracani in 1322; it is said to be still preserved, intact, in the Liceo.

* Vasari asserts that Giotto was taken to Avignon by Clement V., and that he returned to Italy in 1316. Giotto might have paid a first visit to Avignon in or after 1309, the year Pope Clement settled there, but in that case he must have returned thither many years afterwards, in the reign of John XXII., for it was that Pope, and not Clement, who laid the foundations of the Papal palace in 1319, and the walls could not have been ready for the painter before 1323.—Vasari, in fact, himself intimates, in the life of Andrea Pisano, that Giotto was working for the Pope at Avignon three years before 1330, *i. e.* in 1327; and as it was in that year, as we shall find, that Giotto visited Naples, we may safely fix his residence at Avignon during the two or three years previous. And this is confirmed by the fact of Giotto's friendship with Petrarch, as recorded by the poet. The expression, "Duos ego cognovi," &c., argues a somewhat intimate and prolonged acquaintance. Petrarch, born in 1304, was exactly twenty in 1324, when he returned from Bologna to Avignon, where he resided till 1335, the year when he went to Rome—for a moment only. I conclude therefore that his friendship with Giotto was formed during this mutual sojourn at the Papal court in and after 1324.—That Giotto did, in verity, work at Avignon, is proved by the testimony of a contemporary commentator on Dante, quoted by Vasari in his life of Cimabue.

the sole vestiges are the frescoes in the chapel of the Inquisition, woefully dilapidated. Our Saviour's Baptism, his Conversation with the woman of Samaria, the Repulse of Theodosius by S. Ambrose from the door of the Cathedral of Milan, after the massacre of Thessalonica, S. Louis encamped in Egypt, with the pyramids in the distance,—and a group of soldiers leading a condemned heretic to the stake, are subjects still recognisable; some of the costumes are very rich and characteristic, and many of the figures beautiful. But time, neglect and violence have almost totally effaced them. It was during this residence at Avignon, that Giotto added the friendship of the living Petrarch to the memory of that which he had enjoyed for so many years with Dante, lately deceased at Ravenna.

Giotto returned to Florence in 1327. Robert I. of Naples, whose son Charles, Duke of Calabria, had been elected Signor of Florence in the preceding year, wrote to the Duke to secure him the painter's services at any price, and Giotto accordingly, after painting the Duke's portrait in the Palazzo Vecchio,* appears to have gone on direct to Naples, taking Orvieto on his road,† as we have seen in the history of the Sienese sculptors, Agostino and Agnolo. To this year also probably belong the compositions for

* Vasari, in his life of Michelozzo.

† This, according to Vasari, was shortly after the death of Guido Tarlati, Bishop and Signor of Arezzo, in October 1327.—Charles Duke of Calabria quitted Florence for Rome on the 28th of September that year.

the door of the Baptistery, cast in bronze by Andrea Pisano.

He received the kindest welcome from the "good King Robert," and executed for him a variety of works—a series of the illustrious characters of history in the great hall of his palace, numerous subjects from the Old and New Testaments in the different chapels of S. Chiara, others in the Incoronata, &c., &c., all now destroyed except the frescoes in the last-named edifice, representing the Church and her Seven Sacraments, which rank among the most beautiful productions of his pencil.

They fill the intersections of the groined vault at the Western extremity of the nave. The first of the series, half destroyed, represents 'Santa Chiesa,' or 'Holy Church,' personified as the Bride seated in front of Our Saviour, and presenting with her left hand the cup to S. Peter, with her right the wafer to S. Paul—the two Apostles receiving them standing, as in the similar composition on the Dalmatica; the former is attended by King Robert and his son, the Duke of Calabria, carrying their banners *semée* with fleurs-de-lys,—the latter by figures in the white dress of the Carthusians; but this side of the composition is quite defaced.—Baptism and Confirmation, the Second and Third subjects, are good, but not equal to the Fourth, representing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which is admirable. The Fifth represents Penance, with its preliminary, Confession, —the penitent kneeling before a priest, who turns his head away while listening to him, confessionals

being of very modern date; three penitents are seen departing, their faces covered, and scourging themselves—the expression is excellent. In the Sixth, Ordination, the Pope officiates, assisted by two Archbishops and two Carthusian monks. In the Seventh, Marriage, the husband contrasts ill with the lady and her maidens, who are full of grace and beauty, and all evidently portraits.* The Eighth and last represents Extreme Unction.

Both in composition and in feeling these frescoes are singularly beautiful; the female figures are lovely, and the colouring is remarkably harmonious. Each scene is represented under an open loggia or porch, either of Gothic or Lombard architecture, intended probably for a church, but even more extravagantly disproportioned than usual in Giotto's works.†

And this is all that remains of him at Naples. The frescoes of S. Chiara, indeed, existed in full beauty till the beginning of last century, when a certain Barionuovo, the superintendent of the convent,

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* The bride and bridegroom are usually supposed to represent Joanna of Naples and Andrew of Hungary. But dates widely disagree. The most recent marriage in the royal family of Naples was that solemnized in 1324, between Charles Duke of Calabria and his second wife Mary, daughter of Charles Duke of Valois, brother of Philip the Fair. They both died at Naples within a month of each other, towards the close of 1328.

† These frescoes have been recently engraved and published at Berlin, with explanatory descriptions, by Stanislas Aloé, Secretary of the Museo Borbonico, &c., 4to, 1843. He observes, "Les habillemens et les accessoires sont peints à fresque, mais les têtes sont retouchées à sec, et travaillées avec tant de soin et de diligence, qu'elles paraissent autant de miniatures."

persuaded the nuns to white wash them on the pretence that they made the church dark and gloomy.*

King Robert, ever partial to men of mind and genius, took especial delight in Giotto's society, and used frequently to visit him while working in the Castello dell' Uovo, taking pleasure in watching his pencil and listening to his discourse; "and Giotto," says Vasari, "who had ever his repartee and *bon mot* ready, held him there fascinated, at once with the magic of his pencil and the pleasantry of his tongue."—We are not told the length of his sojourn at Naples, but it must have been for a considerable period, judging from the quantity of works he executed there.

He had certainly returned to Florence in 1332.†

SECTION 5. *Fifth and closing Period: Giotto's latest Works at Florence.*

WE have now, in the fifth and last period of Giotto's career, to contemplate him not merely as a Painter, but as an Architect and a Sculptor, elements less peculiarly his own than Painting, but in which he breathed freely, like most great painters in those happier days when the three arts were like three vast branches of one giant cedar, rooted in Christ, imbibing at every leaf the pure and genial influences

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* *De' Dominici, Vite, &c.*, tom. i, p. 65.

† Vasari says he painted some frescoes from the New Testament (then much destroyed) in the 'Nunziata' at Gaëta, on his return from Naples.

of the Holy Spirit, and perfuming God's altar, Lebanon, with their fragrance.

The Duomo of Florence was by this time completed, with the exception of the cupola and the upper part of the Western façade, which Andrea Pisano had begun to sculpture in marble after Giotto's designs many years before. The Baptistery, a much older building, and which had originally served as the Cathedral, duly fronted it, and Andrea was occupied in casting the door in bronze, also (as we have concluded) under Giotto's auspices. But the Campanile, or bell-tower, as yet was not, and in 1332 Giotto was chosen to erect it, on the ground avowedly of the universality of his talents,* with the appointment of Capo-maestro, or chief architect of the Cathedral and its dependencies, a yearly salary of one hundred gold florins, and the privilege of citizenship,† and under the special understanding that he was not to quit Florence.‡ His designs being

* The words of the decree are given as follows by M. Bernhard, in his notice of the life of Giotto:—"Cùm in universo orbe non reperiri dicetur quemquam qui sufficientior sit in his et aliis multis (artibus) Magistro Giotto Bondonis de Florentiâ pictori, et accipiendus sit in patriâ suâ velut magnus magister, &c." *Biogr. Universelle.*

† So says Vasari, but from Villani's expression, "nostro cittadino," he might appear to have enjoyed that privilege sooner. Boccaccio and Petrarch both style him citizen,—see *supra*, p. 177 *note*.

‡ Förster cites the following Memoranda from the books of the Arte della Lana:—"1331. Si ricominciò la fabbrica di S. Reparata (the Cathedral) già da più anni sospesa."—"1332. Si provvisiona Giotto, eccellente architetto, perchè seguiti la fabbrica di S. Maria del Fiore, e non parta di Firenze." *Beiträge,*

approved of, the republic passed a decree in the spring of 1334, that "the Campanile should be built so as to exceed in magnificence, height and excellence of workmanship whatever in that kind had been achieved of old by the Greeks and Romans in the time of their utmost power and greatness—"della loro più florida potenza."* The first stone was laid accordingly, with great pomp, on the 18th of July following,† and the work prosecuted with such vigour and with such costliness and utter disregard of expense, that a citizen of Verona, looking on, exclaimed that the republic was taxing her strength too far,—that the united resources of two great monarchs would be insufficient to complete it; a criticism which the

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&c., p. 151.—And Von Rumohr the following passage from the chronicler Buoninsegni, "Si cominciò a fondare il Campanile di Santa Liparata (Reparata)...e funne fatto Capo-maestro M. Giotto, cittadino Fiorentino." *Ital. Forschungen*, tom. ii, p. 46. —Giovanni Villani moreover says that the first stone of the Campanile was laid on the 18th July, 1334, "e soprastante e provveditore della detta opera di S. Reparata fu fatto per lo comune Maestro Giotto, nostro cittadino,...e fugli dato salario dal comune per remunerazione della sua virtù e bontà," *Cronica*, lib. xi, cap. 12.—From these citations I gather that Giotto was only actually engaged on the Campanile, included under the term 'Opera di S. Reparata." Förster, on the contrary, thinks the façade of the Cathedral was begun by Andrea Pisano as late as 1334, under Giotto's superintendance.

* "Si vuole che superata l'intelligenza etiam di chi fosse atto a darne giudizio, si costituisca un edificio così magnifico, che per altezza e qualità del lavoro, venga a superare tanti quanti in quel genere ne fossero stati fatti da' Greci e da' Romani ne' tempi della loro più florida potenza." *Quoted from Richa by Förster, Beiträge, &c.*, p. 155.

† *Giov. Villani, loc. citato.*

Signoria resented by confining him for two months in prison, and afterwards conducting him through the public treasury, to teach him that the Florentines could build their whole city of marble, and not one poor steeple only, were they so inclined.*

Giotto made a model of his proposed structure, on which every stone was marked, and the successive courses painted red and white, according to his design, so as to match with the Cathedral and Baptistery; this model was of course adhered to strictly during the short remnant of his life, and the work was completed in strict conformity to it after his death, with the exception of the spire, which, the taste having changed, was never added. He had intended it to be one hundred *braccia*, or one hundred and fifty feet high.

During these last few years Giotto also made designs and models in relief for the bas-reliefs of the basement story, two of which, the first and second on the Northern side, he sculptured himself, being "skilled," as Ghiberti tells us, both "in one art and in the other," although these are his only known works in marble.† Possibly—Andrea Pisano being

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* 'Firenze Antica e Moderna,' 1790, tom ii, p. 362.

† "Giotto...fu degnissimo in tutta l' arte ancora nell' arte statuaria. Le prime storie sono nell' edificio il quale fu da lui edificato del Campanile di Santa Reparata furono di sua mano scolpite e disegnate. Nella mia età vidi provvedimenti di sua mano(a) di dette istorie egregiissimamente disegnati. Fu perito

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a "Modelli di rilievo di man di Giotto," says Vasari, referring to Ghiberti's testimony.

then busy with the door of the Baptistery—he may have intended to execute the whole series himself, and have been prevented merely by death from doing so. The remaining bas-reliefs were subsequently executed, for the most part by Andrea Pisano, in strict adherence to his designs and plan; above them, in the second and third stories, where he had proposed introducing other bas-reliefs and statues, the spaces left vacant for them in the course of building, were gradually filled up by the labours of Giottino, Donatello and others, doubtless more or less from their own invention, although Giotto's original selection of subjects was probably still adhered to.

Altogether Europe might be ransacked to produce a building more exquisitely lovely than this Campanile of Giotto; it may fairly be considered the *chef-d'œuvre* of the Tuscan-Gothic or Pisan school of Pointed Architecture.

Let us approach its base and examine the bas-reliefs. They form a most interesting series, exhibiting, in distinct compartments—six on the fourth or Eastern wall, and seven on each of the remaining three—an epitome of history, a chronicle of human progression, physical, intellectual, and moral, from

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nell' uno genere e nell' altro." *Ghiberti.*—In the life of Giotto Vasari tells us that he sculptured "parte di quelle storie di marmo, dove sono i principi di tutte l' arti,"—but in that of Luca della Robbia he limits his workmanship to the first and second, representing Sculpture and Architecture, on the Northern face of the Campanile. The remaining five, on that side, were sculptured, after Giotto's original design, by Luca, and all the rest by Andrea Pisano.

the Creation till the present time. Some of the subjects may be variously interpreted, but I think there can be little doubt as to the grand outline contemplated by Giotto, and that he has intended to sketch the First stage of society, the Patriarchal, in the compositions on the Western face,—the Second, or National, in those on the Southern,—the Third, or period of discovery and colonization, marked by the introduction of a new law of association and civilization in Christianity, in those on the Eastern, —and the Fourth, or period of intellectual and moral development under which we live, that, in a word, of Christian Europe, on the Northern. I shall enumerate them, as usual, one by one, in order.

Western Face.

First Stage of Society—the Patriarchal.

I. The Creation of Adam.

II. The Creation of Eve.—Both these are the traditional compositions, and very graceful.

III. Adam delving and Eve spinning,—the one cultivating the earth, the other providing raiment for the family, the first step in the progress of society after the Fall.

The history of Cain and Abel, foreshadowing the two primary principles of society, the Sensual and Spiritual, Active and Contemplative, Secular and Religious, and their mutual antagonism from the first, is omitted, probably because the progress of civilization depends almost entirely at first upon the

Active, and (if I may so term it) the irreligious principle, the goodness of God, by a divine chemistry, transmuting its acquisitions into gold. Thus we find that while the 'Sons of God,' or descendants of Seth, continued for ages to dwell apart from their brethren, the descendants of Cain, it was the latter family, the Seculars of the antediluvian world, who, in the persons of Jabal, Jubal and Tubalcain, the three sons of Lamech, the introducer of polygamy and slayer of his aged progenitor Cain, invented the arts and professions of life. The three brothers are accordingly represented in the fourth, fifth, and sixth compartments of the present series, each with his distinctive imagery and attributes,

IV. Jabal—"the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle,"—sitting at the door of his tent, his sheep around him, and accompanied by his watch-dog;

V. Jubal—the inventor of the "harp and organ," to solace (according to the chroniclers) the leisure of his brother Jabal—seated in a chair, and blowing a trumpet, Giotto apparently considering him as the parent of music in its extended sense,—and

VI. Tubalcain—the "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron"—hammering on his anvil.

Innocent in themselves, and the natural birth and consequence of a more active life, it seems unfair to argue against the possible origin in innocence of these occupations, from the fact that they have been so specially noted by Moses as the offspring of the race of Cain. But the ancient Fathers look on the three

brothers as the respective parents of Idleness, Luxury and War—attributes certainly of the reign of Sense, under which the mechanical arts ever make the swiftest progress.

The 'Sons of God' having mingled with the 'Daughters of Men,' wickedness covered the earth, and the elder world was swept away by the flood,—the arts probably, or at least their first principles, together with the wisdom (such as it was) of the Antediluvians, defecated and purified, being preserved by Noah in the ark, and transmitted to his successors. After that catastrophe, the temperature and constitution of the earth being probably changed, (such at least was the earlier Christian belief,) new props of existence were granted to man, animal food and wine, the latter the discovery of Noah, as commemorated in Compartment

VII. representing his Drunkenness. He is seen lying under the vine with a hogshead beside him.

Southern face.

Second Stage of Society—the State or Nation.

I. Astronomy, whether with reference to agriculture or to the influence of the stars on man, was certainly the earliest science, and is here represented by an aged man, seated, observing the zodiac with a quadrant, a celestial globe standing beside him:—Or perhaps, by a broader interpretation, this bas-relief may express the first glance of man beyond

his immediate horizon, over the earth in its length and breadth, and the heavens above him.

II. House-building.—The provision of a stationary home, the step immediately consequent on the abandonment of the nomad or patriarchal life.

III. A woman presenting earthen vessels to a man who places them on a shelf.—A subject difficult to interpret. It has been explained as the invention of pottery,* and as that of medicine;† if the latter, it is remarkable that it should be introduced immediately after exchanging life in the open air for the closer and enfeebling atmosphere of in-doors.

IV. A man on horseback, riding at full gallop, very spirited. A noble emblem of the energy and enterprise of the male sex.

V. A woman weaving.—Expressive of female domesticity, according to the ancient proverb, "Domum mansit, lanam fecit."

VI. Legislation.—An old man, seated in a raised niche, delivering a book of laws to a man kneeling before him; two others sit to the right and left, as his assessors.—Probably representing the Dorian or Cretan Minos, a real character doubtless, but partially confounded, it would seem, with Noah,‡ attended by his brothers Æacus and Rhadamanthus.

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* *Förster, Beiträge, &c.*, p. 157.

† *Firenze Antica e Moderna*, tom. ii, p. 369.

‡ Like the Menai or Menes of Egypt and Menu of India. The three names have certainly a most singular and suggestive resemblance. Noah's legislation was certainly depicted in the paintings of the Tower of Babel; even the name of the fish-god Oannes, inscribed over them, as recorded by Berosus, would ap-

VII. Dædalus flying.—Probably to signify the dispersion of nations, which broke up the One primitive state, for which the City and Tower of Babel were designed, contrary to the will and command of God, to secure an earthly immortality. It was not thus that the divine behest, "Replenish the earth," was to be obeyed.

Eastern face.

Discovery and Subdual of the Earth—with the Introduction of the new law of Christianity.

I. Colonization,—represented by three figures in a boat, rowing. Full of truth and spirit.

II. Hercules, with his club, standing over Antæus, dead at his feet.—Indicating the "subduing of the earth" by clearing it of monsters, giants, &c., the first step in the settlement of newly discovered countries. Theseus, Jason, Cadmus, Perseus, &c., were benefactors of this kind, and Hercules was the type of the class.

III. A man ploughing with oxen,—full of spirit; the character of the animals (as usual with Giotto) is admirably given.—Representing Agriculture, or the reclaiming the soil after its conquest and clearance from the "thorns and thistles," with which it has been the lot of man to struggle, metaphorically as well as in reality, since the fall.

IV. A man in a waggon or chariot, drawn by a

pear to be his—'Nao,' that is to say, mis-read from left to right, with a Greek termination.

horse.—Excellent. Perhaps intended to express the *ne plus ultra* of earthly prosperity, and the luxury consequent thereon.

Every step in this progression hitherto has been one of contest with matter, in the advance to physical perfection and the vindication of man's patent of nobility as Lord of Creation. It is now time for the development of the higher intellectual being, under the spiritual guidance and rule of religion. Hence the introduction in number

v., of the Lamb bearing the Cross, as the all-comprehensive symbol of Christianity.

The remaining bas-reliefs of the series, including the sixth and last on the Eastern, and the seven on the Northern wall, represent accordingly the development of the two ruling departments of intellect, Imagination and Reason, in the Fine Arts, in Philosophy, in Poetry, in the Exact Sciences, and in that sublimer Wisdom, the birth of both, which harmonises them all with each other and with God.

VI. Architecture,—is represented by an old man seated at a desk and holding a pair of compasses.

Northern face.

I. Sculpture,—by a sculptor carving a statue.—

II. Painting,—by an artist sitting at his easel, a box of colours beside him, and a Gothic *trittico*, triptych, or tri-pyramidal altar-piece behind him.

III. Grammar, or the discrimination of ideas by language, the first step to the exercise of reason,—by a schoolmaster, hearing two boys their lessons.

IV. Philosophy,—by an old man, with his hands stretched out, instructing a youth holding a scroll.

V. Poetry,—by Orpheus, (a prophet and type, as you will remember, of the Messiah,) sitting under a tree, playing on the mandoline, with the beasts and birds all gathered round him.

VI. The Exact Sciences,—by an aged sage writing on a tablet, and a middle-aged man holding out his hand demonstratively, both in turbans; probably, as representing the Saracenic instructors of the Europeans in astronomy, geometry and the mathematics.—And finally,

VII. Music,—by an old man, apparently Pythagoras, listening to the sounds of a bar of iron, as he strikes it with a hammer, and thus deducing the laws of harmony,—though he is probably here introduced as the father of that lofty and spiritual philosophy, inherited probably in the germ from the early Antediluvians, and still perpetuated in the East as the Buddhism and kindred systems I have so often mentioned, but disencumbered from its grosser elements and elevated and intellectualised into Wisdom by the sage of Crotona,—a wisdom which, recognising Harmony as the Law of the Universe and the echo of the voice of God, pronounces Vice to be the Discord and Virtue the Music of creation, and endeavours to reduce the "warring members" of human nature, Sense and Intellect, under the "easy yoke" of Spirit, or Christianity.—An emblem most appropriate, as it will at once approve itself, to the Campanile or Bell-tower of a Cathedral.

The whole series is, in its peculiar character and spirit, unparalleled in Italy, and in many respects, especially in a certain indescribable domesticity of feeling, reminds one of the poems of Schiller and the frescoes of the modern philosophical painters of Germany.

While occupied in thinking out this grand idea, Giotto's pencil, the sceptre of his more peculiar sovereignty, was in no wise idle. He painted a picture for the church of S. Giorgio and a fresco for the Badia, and in the great hall (especially) of the Bargello, one of his most celebrated compositions, the "Comune rubato da molti," commended by Vasari as equally excellent in invention and execution, and in which, as we may gather from his description, the State was personified by a figure seated as a Judge, with sceptre in hand, adjusting the scales of a vast balance by the suggestions and advice of the Four Cardinal Virtues. This noble fresco has been whitewashed, but not long ago two heads were uncovered, of Saints apparently, and singularly beautiful; and it is to be hoped the whole may eventually be restored to our admiration.

Probably too, (although I would suggest this with much diffidence,) the Inferno on the entrance-wall of the chapel of the Bargello, opposite the Gloria distinguished by the portrait of Dante, was executed at this period; the contours of the naked figures are softer, more flowing and more accurate than in the majority, at least, of his preceding works. It seems

to have been left unfinished, which may be accounted for by his having been sent by the Signoria to Milan, at the request of their ally Azzo Visconti, to paint in his palace,* where he executed some frescoes of great beauty, now no more. He returned to Florence towards the close of 1336, but died there on the 8th of January, 1337,† suddenly as it would appear, and certainly prematurely, as he was but sixty, and his genius as vigorous and upsoaring as ever.

He received the honour of public burial in the Cathedral,‡ where a bust, as I have already mentioned, sculptured by Benedetto da Majano, was afterwards erected to his memory by Lorenzo de' Medici, accompanied by a tablet inscribed with the following lines by Politian:—

"Ille ego sum per quem pictura extincta revixit,
Cui quàm recta manus tam fuit et facilis.
Naturæ deerat nostræ quod defuit arti;
Plùs licuit nulli pingere nec melius.
Miraris turrim egregiam sacro ære sonantem?
Hæc quoque de modulo crevit ad astra meo.
Denique sum Jottus; quid opus fuit illa referre?
Hoc nomen longi carminis instar erit."

Which may be thus paraphrased:—

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* This must have been after Sept. 15, 1335, at which period he was still at Florence, as proved by a contract cited by Baldinucci. Vasari, in the life of Taddeo Gaddi, says that he was "andato a Milano" in 1333, perhaps a typographical error for 1335.

† According to the new style,—but 1336, according to the old, the year beginning formerly on the 25th of March.—*G. Villani, Cronica*, lib. xi, cap. 12.

‡ *Giov. Villani, loc. cit.*

"I am the man to Painting's corpse who said
'Arise and live!'—and the pale death obey'd;
I breathed on her, I gave her back her youth,
She loved me, and her dower was grace and truth;
Henceforth my own and Nature's praise are one—
No man hath painted more, and better none.
Nor this is all,—yon belfry, morn and even
Voiceful of God appeas'd and man forgiven—
That arrow too my genius shot tow'rds heaven.
Yet what are words? Lo, I am Giotto! Fame
Hath not a verse so pregnant as my name."

Painting indeed stands indebted to Giotto beyond any of her children. His history is a most instructive one. Endowed with the liveliest fancy, and with that facility which so often betrays genius, and achieving in youth a reputation which the age of Methuselah could not have added to, he had yet the discernment to perceive how much still remained to be done, and the resolution to bind himself (as it were) to Nature's chariot-wheel, confident that she would ere long emancipate and own him as her son. Calm and unimpassioned, he seems to have commenced his career with a deliberate survey of the difficulties he had to encounter and of his resources for the conflict, and then to have worked upon a system, steadily and perseveringly, prophetically sure of victory. His life was indeed one continued triumph,—and no conqueror ever mounted to the Capitol with a step more equal and sedate. We find him, at first, slowly and cautiously endeavouring to infuse new life into the traditional compositions, by substituting the heads, attitudes, and drapery of the

actual world for the spectral forms and conventional types of the mosaics and the Byzantine painters,—idealising them when the personages represented were of higher mark and dignity, but in none ever out-stepping truth. Niccola Pisano had set him the example in this, as in other things, but Giotto first gave full development to the principle in painting,—and even in sculpture, we have seen the influence he exerted on it in the person of Andrea Pisano.

His second step was to vindicate the right of Modern Europe to think, feel and judge for herself, and either to re-issue or to recoin the treasured gold of the past, according as the image and superscription are or are not worth perusal. Giotto had little reverence for antiquity, dissociated from truth and beauty, and was almost the first to assert in Art that liberty of thought from which, as from the "noble and untamed diamond," we may extract, by a holy and lawful alchemy, the elixir of life and immortality. Hence his successive modifications and improvements of the traditional compositions, hence his fearless introduction of new ones, hence the limitless variety of his creations, whether drawn from sacred or ecclesiastical history, or from the boundless fairy-land of allegory,—hence his new style in details,—hence too, (for it was from the very richness of his fancy that he learnt to economise its stores,) that compromise between Reason and Imagination, Fancy and Common Sense, which results in a fullness that never overflows, a simplicity that never degenerates into meagreness—a Propriety, in short, of composi-

tion in which none perhaps but Raphael ever equalled or excelled him.

Advancing in his career, we find year by year the fruits of continuous unwearied study in a consistent and equable contemporary improvement in all the various minuter though most important departments of his art, in his design, his drapery, his colouring, in the dignity and expression of his men and in the grace of his women—asperities softened down, little graces unexpectedly born and playing about his path, as if to make amends for the deformity of his actual offspring—touches, daily more numerous, of that nature which makes the world akin—and ever and always a keen yet cheerful sympathy with life, a playful humour mingling with his graver lessons, which affects us the more as coming from one who, knowing himself an object personally of disgust and ridicule, could yet satirise with a smile.

Finally, throughout his works, we are conscious of an earnest, a lofty, a religious aim and purpose, as of one who felt himself a pioneer of civilization in a newly discovered world, the Adam of a new Eden freshly planted in the earth's wilderness, a mouthpiece of God and a preacher of righteousness to mankind.—And here we must establish a distinction very necessary to be recognised before we can duly appreciate the relative merits of the elder painters in this, the most important point in which we can view their character. Giotto's genius, however universal, was still (as I have repeatedly observed) Dramatic rather than Contemplative,—a tendency

in which his scholars and successors almost to a man resembled him. Now, just as in actual life—where, with a few rare exceptions, all men rank under two great categories according as Imagination or Reason predominate in their intellectual character — two individuals may be equally impressed with the truths of Christianity and yet differ essentially in its outward manifestation, the one dwelling in action, the other in contemplation, the one in strife, the other in peace, the one (so to speak) in hate, the other in love, the one struggling with devils, the other communing with angels, yet each serving as a channel of God's mercies to man, each (we may believe) offering him service equally acceptable in his sight—even so shall we find it in art and with artists; few in whom the Dramatic power predominates will be found to excel in the expression of religious emotions of the more abstract and enthusiastic cast, even although men of indisputably pure and holy character themselves; and *vice versâ*, few of the more Contemplative but will feel bewildered and at fault, if they descend from their starry region of light into the grosser atmosphere that girdles in this world of action. The works of artists are their minds' mirror; they cannot express what they do not feel; each class dwells apart and seeks its ideal in a distinct sphere of emotion,— their object is different, and their success proportioned to the exclusiveness with which they pursue that object. A few indeed there have been in all ages, monarchs of the mind and types of Our Saviour, who have lived a two-fold

existence of action and contemplation, in art, in song, in politics, and in daily life; of these have been Abraham, Moses, David and Cyrus in the elder world, Alfred, Charlemagne, Dante and perhaps Shakspeare in the new,—and in art, Niccola Pisano, Leonard da Vinci and Michael Angelo. But Giotto, however great as the patriarch of his peculiar tribe, was not of these few, and we ought not therefore to misapprehend him or be disappointed at finding his Madonnas (for instance) less exquisitely spiritual than the Sienese, or those of Fra Angelico and some later painters, who seem to have dipped their pencils in the rainbow that circles the throne of God,—they are pure and modest, but that is all; on the other hand, where his Contemplative rivals lack utterance, he speaks most feelingly to the heart in his own peculiar language of Dramatic composition, he glances over creation with the eye of love, all the charities of life follow in his steps, and his thoughts are as the breath of the morning. A man of the world, living in it and loving it, yet with a heart that it could not spoil nor wean from its allegiance to God—"non meno buon Cristiano che eccellente pittore," as Vasari emphatically describes him—his religion breathes of the free air of heaven rather than the cloister, neither enthusiastic nor superstitious, but practical, manly and healthy—and this, although the picturesque biographer of S. Francis! *

* See his very prosaic and very sensible *canzone* on Poverty, *Von Rumohr, Ital. Forschungen*, tom. ii, p. 51, or *Rosini*, tom. ii, p. 68.

But I would not be misunderstood. I do not mean to assert that (humanly speaking) the man who lives in action stands not in a position more perilous than the dweller in contemplation, or that the dramatic spirit, either in life or in art, has not a natural tendency to the secular and irreligious. But during the fourteenth century Christianity, however dim and corrupted, was still the object of general belief and acceptation,—it was a reality, present to every man's eye and heart, and the Giotteschi (like the school of the Freemasons in Architecture, and of Niccola Pisano in Sculpture) felt it as such, and were to a man, in the strictest sense of the word, religious painters. It was not till the century that succeeded, when Paganism, like a loosened glacier, broke down on Italy, that this ultimate tendency declared itself; the Giottesque then became the Classic or pagan school of Florence; the little knot of Christian artists, who dissented from the general movement, either migrated to Umbria or stood aside in comparative neglect, while the Contemplative school of Siena died out altogether, and its history and very existence slipped out of mind and became as it were a tale that has been told.

PART II.—THE GIOTTESCHI.

WE will now trace the lives and examine the works of the Giotteschi, or followers of Giotto, during the century preceding the revolution just alluded to—preceding, that is to say, the supremacy of Masolino, Masaccio and Uccello, the fathers of Painting during the Second Period of European art, as inspired by Ghiberti and Donatello. I shall divide this Second Part of my Letter into five sections, the First devoted to the pupils of Giotto, in their two natural subdivisions, the proselytes from pre-existent schools and his own immediate disciples; the Second and Third, to the school of Taddeo Gaddi, in its two Tuscan branches, the one descended from Giovanni da Milano, the other from Giacomo da Casentino; the Fourth, to the Giotteschi of Lombardy, and the Fifth to those of Umbria,—noticing only, as a general rule, such artists as contributed to the progress of painting, or otherwise merit distinction from the vulgar herd whose name is legion.

SECTION 1. *Pupils of Giotto.—Proselytes from pre-existent Schools—Immediate Disciples.*

THE earliest and one of the ablest of Giotto's pupils appears to have been Pietro Cavallini, of Rome, mentioned in a former letter as among the last and most celebrated of the Italico-Byzantine race of

mosaicists, and as the assistant of Giotto, although much his senior, in the great work of the 'Navicella di S. Pietro.'* The intercourse thus commenced was continued in after years, to the great advantage of the elder artist, who covered the churches of Rome with his frescoes, retaining however to the last many of the distinctive marks of the old Byzantine style. These works however have long since disappeared, and the sole relic of his pencil is the Crucifixion, painted in fresco for Walter Duke of Athens, in the Lower Church of Assisi, and which is said to have been highly praised by Michael Angelo. It speaks for him, indeed, with the voice of a host. The composition is noble, full of that fearless boldness and strength in which the great Florentine himself excelled; the attitudes of the thieves, whose arms are tied above their heads, are novel and masterly; the sky is filled with angels wringing their hands, as in the fresco of Buffalmacco in the Campo Santo, which this also resembles in the horses and horsemen introduced at the foot of the cross; the waist-band of Our Saviour is in the Byzantine style, and if the modern altar which conceals the feet were removed, they would probably appear to be separately nailed; blue and grey predominate in the colouring, tints which characterize more or less all the painters of Byzantine descent or sympathies. But, on the other hand, the design, daring at once and accurate to a singular degree, and far superior to that of Buffalmacco,

* Vide *supra*, pp. 66, 171.

Orcagna, or the Sienese, stamps him as a Giottesco, and vindicates the emphatic praise bestowed on him by Ghiberti of "dottissimo . . . nobilissimo maestro."*

And yet, with all this boldness and independence of thought and purpose, Cavallini was no stranger to the softer emotions of piety and love; his Annunciations were very celebrated, and the composition so familiar to us in the paintings of Fra Angelico and the Umbrian school, is supposed to have been his originally, modified from the Byzantine.†

His personal character was pure and noble; no sordid views influenced him as an artist, and as a man, he was deeply religious, charitable to the poor, loving and beloved by every one, and his old age exhibited such a pattern of holiness and virtue that he was reverenced as a Saint on earth, and more than one of his paintings was invested after his death, in popular estimation, with miraculous powers.‡

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* This Crucifixion (engraved in Rosini, tav. 21) will be found on the Western wall of the Northern transept of the Lower church. It was probably painted, either between 1326, when Walter was sent by the Duke of Calabria to take possession of Florence, and 1331, when he embarked for Greece—or during his brief reign as Signor of Florence in 1342 and 1343. After his expulsion he retired to France, where he resided the remainder of his life. He was killed at Poitiers in 1356.

† One such Annunciation is still preserved in S. Marco, Florence, repainted or restored, according to Professor Rosini, by Fra Angelico. *Storia, &c.* tom. ii, p. 11.

‡ "Nè creda nessuno per ciò, che non è quasi possibile, e la continua sperienza ce lo dimostra, che si possa senza il timor e grazia di Dio, e senza la bontà de' costumi, ad onorato grado pervenire." *Vasari.*—The Annunciation mentioned in the preceding note is accounted miraculous.

He died, it is said, in 1344 at Rome, in the eighty-fifth year of his age,* and was buried in the basilica of S. Paolo, amid the frescoes and mosaics with which he had adorned it in early life. He left no scholars of eminence.

Next to Cavallini, in point of date though not of merit, may be reckoned Puccio Capanna, who worked under Giotto at Assisi, of which town it seems probable that he was a native.† Vasari tells us that he completely adopted Giotto's style and manner, from which fact, and a comparison of the frescoes usually attributed to him in the Northern transept of the Lower church of S. Francis, with his last and most authentic works at Pistoja,‡ I think we may conclude that the former are not by him—which is my sole reason for mentioning him here. Ghiberti omits his name altogether.

That of Messer Simone, of Naples, might be passed over with equal indifference, were it not for

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* In 1344, according to the annotator on Baldinucci, tom. ii, p. 14, edit. Manni.—Aged eighty-five, according to Vasari, who, however, says that he worked about 1364. This latter date cannot be correct. It may possibly be a misprint, to which Arabic numerals are very liable.

† Vasari supposed him a Florentine, through misunderstanding his signature 'Puccio di Fiorenza,' elsewhere more fully given, 'di Ser Fiorenza,' the 'son of Fiorenza.' The Capanna were a family of Assisi. *Ciampi, Notizie Inedite, &c.*, p. 104.

‡ Those in the Chapter-hall of the monastery of S. Francis, representing the tree of the 'religione' or order, &c., and the Apostles Peter and Paul, with S. Laurence and S. Louis on the vault of the Sacristy. Capanna was working there in 1386. *Ciampi, Notizie, &c.*, p. 103-6.

the interesting circumstances under which he became Giotto's disciple, and for the rank he holds as the parent of the Giottesque school in that city. He had been instructed by Pippo, or Filippo Tesauro, pupil of Tomaso de' Stefani, mentioned in a previous page,* and enjoyed a considerable reputation till Giotto's arrival in 1327, which threw him completely into the shade. He fell ill in consequence, but was too humble-minded to complain, doing ample justice to Giotto's merit, though at the same time self-love whispered that his own rendered him not absolutely unworthy of notice. He determined therefore to make Giotto himself his judge, and placed some of his pictures in such a position as to attract his eye; the experiment succeeded; Giotto praised them highly, and recommended him to King Robert, who employed him in S. Chiara; he soon regained his spirits and his credit, and flourished for several years afterwards, abandoning his original style and imitating that of Giotto,† which he transmitted to his son Francesco, and the latter to a crowd of artists whose works, scattered through Naples, display less genius and originality than those of any other branch of the Giotteschi. The last to enjoy an undisputed pre-eminence was Colantonio, father-in-law of the celebrated Zingaro, in the fifteenth century; and who is himself reported to have abandoned, in his

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* *Vide supra*, p. 92.

† The story is told (after Stanzioni) by De' Dominici, in his *Vite de' Pittori &c. Napoletani*, tom. i, p. 70.

latter years, the Giottesque for the new manner introduced in Flanders by Van Eyck.*

Another Simon, familiar to you by name already as the great artist of Siena, underwent Giotto's influence shortly before the death of that illustrious man in 1337. Not, indeed, that he became his actual pupil, which I see no good reason to believe, but his later works at Florence and Assisi clearly bespeak a reverent familiarity with those of Giotto, while he retains, notwithstanding, the merits and peculiarities of his native school. Between Giotto's death and his own, Simon was reckoned the first painter in Italy, and he certainly surpassed his great rival in the extent and copiousness of his composition, a quality however in which he found few followers. I will speak further of him under the Sienese school, —in which, let me remark by anticipation, the brothers Pietro and Ambrogio di Lorenzo were also flourishing contemporarily with Giotto and his pupils, and, like the still more illustrious Orcagna, imbibing, imperceptibly to themselves and almost so to us, that refreshing influence which the genius of the great Florentine had suffused (as it were) over the whole atmosphere of Italian art—like one of those subtle

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* For notice of the early style of Simon, vide *supra*, p. 92. Specimens by his successors may be seen in one of the large rooms of the Museo Borbonico. A S. Antony, by Colantonio, in the church of S. Antonio del Borgo, dated 1371, and in his early style, is engraved by Agincourt, *Peinture*, pl. 130, 131. His S. James is now preserved in the Museo. Colantonio is said to have been pupil of Francesco di Simone.

perfumes of the Rosicrucians, which bestowed vigour and exaltation of spirit on all who breathed them.

But it is time to turn to the pupils formed exclusively by Giotto, and who became the parents of the main line of the Giotteschi, which ultimately expanded into Masaccio. These were Taddeo Gaddi, Stefano and Maso, or Tomaso, commonly called Giottino, all three natives of Florence and artists of progress, and consequently claiming from us a more minute and patient consideration.

Taddeo Gaddi, son of Gaddo the mosaicist, was dearest to Giotto of all his pupils, having been held by him at the font in baptism, and received at the age of twelve into his bottega, where he dwelt as under a father's roof for nearly twenty-four years,* till their partnership of love was dissolved by the death of Giotto in 1337. After that event Taddeo, who had become no less able an architect than painter under his master's eye, was chosen to continue the fabric of the Campanile, and commissions rapidly multiplied upon him in both departments of art. His first great independent engagement in painting was the decoration, in fresco, of the Chapter-house of S. Maria Novella, now called the Cappella degli Spagnuoli. He had completed the ceiling, and was occupied on the left-hand wall, when the arrival from Avignon of Simon of Siena induced the Prior to

* *Cennino Cennini, Trattato della Pittura*, cap. 67, p. 62, edit. *Tambroni*.

propose to him a partition of the work with this more celebrated artist. Taddeo at once and cheerfully consented, Simon being his personal friend, and the latter accordingly finished the chapel,* which we cannot regret, either on our own account or Taddeo's, as the latter was far less capable of doing it justice. As each several composition in this chapel has reference to the others, and the whole form a grand ode or hymn to the glory of the Dominican order, of which Simon undoubtedly sustains the base and burden, I shall postpone for the present any minute notice of Taddeo's frescoes, merely observing that they are in excellent preservation; that the compositions, in their close general adherence to the traditional outlines, evince his timidity and self-distrust; that the drawing is very fair, but stiff; that the naïveté and simplicity, which is their peculiar charm, are as yet but faintly gilded by that grace which afterwards became his distinguishing characteristic,—and finally, that it is only in the colouring that he equals the best works of Giotto. Nothing indeed can be more evident than that the ease and security with which he had been wont to execute under his master's eye that master's compositions, had deserted him for the moment, while essaying his wings for the first time in an independent flight.†

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* *Vasari.*

† And yet he has shown a timid daring in the Resurrection on the vault of the chapel, where the idea of making the glorified body of Our Saviour the centre and source of illumination occurs for the first time (I believe) in art. But the idea is

But in the chapels of the Southern transept and of the Sacristy of S. Croce, respectively belonging to the Baroncelli and the Rinuccini families, Taddeo appears a new man; his leading-strings have fallen off, and he takes his true position of individuality. The frescoes of the former chapel represent the history of the Virgin and of Our Saviour; the design is often faulty, the feet are almost always anxiously concealed, but the heads are expressive, and there is much ease and grace in the various figures.* Several of the compositions, however, reappear in the Rinuccini chapel, so much improved, that we may fairly conclude the latter series to be of posterior date. It is to these therefore that I would direct your attention as the *chefs-d'œuvre* of this interesting artist. The history of the Virgin is represented on the left wall, that of the Magdalen on the right. In the former series the Dedication of the Virgin is peculiarly beautiful. She ascends the steps of the temple, looking up at the High Priest, who stands under the archway in readiness to receive her, while from an adjacent cloister the band of maidens, whom she is about to join, press forward with curiosity to see their new playmate, the foremost of them holding a guitar. Immediately at the foot of the staircase stand two little children, a boy and girl, the brother

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merely indicated; he has not ventured to carry it fairly out. It descended through the early Flemish school to Correggio.

* They have been engraved by Carlo Lasinio. Among them, in the Annunciation to the three Kings on the 'Mons Victorialis,' the figure of Our Saviour appears within the star.

with his arm round his sister's neck; other children look on in the right corner, their parents kneeling in adoration, and at the opposite extremity of the fresco stand Joachim and Anna, gazing after the light of their old eyes, whom they have thus parted from, it would seem, for ever. It is a very sweet and touching composition.—And no less beautiful are the three frescoes on the opposite wall, representing Our Saviour in the house of Lazarus, the Resurrection of the latter, and the 'Noli me tangere.' In the first, Mary is seen seated on a little stool at the feet of Our Saviour, looking calmly and humbly up in his face, while Martha, immediately behind her, expostulates; the composition is admirable, and the expression full of sweetness. The Resurrection is a repetition, or rather variation of Giotto's in the chapel of the Bargello, and the 'Noli me tangere' similarly recalls the master's memory; the two women, to whom the angels are saying "He is not here, but is risen," to the right of this, though in the same compartment, are more original, and full of grace and beauty.*

These frescoes are full of calm but deep feeling; the composition is singularly simple and dramatic; the heads are full of character, and there are many

* The frescoes of the Rinuccini chapel have been engraved privately, in outline, with illustrative letter-press, at the expense of the Marchese. Von Rumohr (*Ital. Forschungen*, tom. ii, p. 80) ascribes them to the author of the altar-piece, which bears the date of 1379, and struck me as rather in the style of Angelo Gaddi. The fifth of the small compartments on the predella is the most remarkable; they are very rude.

new ideas; the colouring also is excellent. The general style, without an approach to servile imitation, is Giotto's; he loved his master's memory too dearly, and had too little ambition or enterprise to depart from it, even had his powers enabled him to do so; but there are no attempts at foreshortening, nor any of those *tours-de-force* to which the dramatic principle so naturally leads. It is, in a word, his simple unstudied grace on which Taddeo's character must rest, as one of the steps in the ladder of early art. His later and maturer works, indeed, at Florence, Assisi, &c. having perished, our estimate of him must of necessity be imperfect and inadequate to his merits; but we cannot be mistaken as to the quality of those merits,—and indeed his better part survives in his pupils, especially Giovanni da Milano, to whom he bequeathed the professional education of his son Angelo, afterwards for many years the chief of the school, while he entrusted his initiation into the duties and practice of Christianity to Giacomo da Casentino, whom I shall speak of presently as the parent of a distinct branch of the Tuscan Giotteschi.

The date of Taddeo's death is uncertain; he is last mentioned in 1366.* He added greatly to the fortune accumulated by his father Gaddo, and which his descendants augmented till the family became

* In August that year, *Rumohr, Ital. Forsch.* tom. ii, p. 81. —Among the easel-paintings of Taddeo, let me mention the Burial of Our Saviour, once the altar-piece of the Orsanmichele, now in the Academy,—a variation of the Byzantine composition, the heads of the Apostles fine, the grief not caricatured.

one of the most wealthy and powerful at Florence,—retaining, generation after generation, that love for art and literature, for which its founders had been so honourably distinguished. Taddeo was buried in the first cloister of S. Croce, in the sepulchre which he had erected to the memory of his father Gaddo.

Much more progressive than Taddeo in the path which Giotto had marked out, was Stefano, sister's son to the great regenerator, but whom we must admire, alas! on the credit of Ghiberti and Vasari, since all his best works have perished. Both those critics speak of him with enthusiasm, and it appears certain that he anticipated and boldly grappled with all those problems of the art, which contemporary and later painters for the most part timidly avoided. His invention was copious, his "diligenza," or careful finish, unrivalled; he improved design and perspective, expanding the thin columns of Giotto to more correct proportions,—was the first to indicate the play of muscle and of form under drapery; his foreshortenings were superior to anything of the sort hitherto seen; his happy imitation of all things animal, vegetable and mineral obtained him the somewhat equivocal title of 'Scimia di natura,'—while to all this mechanical excellence he appears to have added a feeling and expression rarely united with it. Vasari speaks with rapture of the sweetness and grace of the angels and elect souls in a Gloria which he left unfinished in the tribune of the Lower church at Assisi; and his judgment may be depended on in

this, for although the pupil and professed adherent of a very different school, Vasari had a heart fully alive to the spiritual beauties of the elder and religious painters. Stefano died, it is said, in 1350. A fresco in the 'Chiostro Verde' of S. Maria Novella, almost entirely repainted, and a small picture in the Brera, or public gallery, at Milan, are his sole existing works, but give no idea of his genius.*

Lastly, as a student of Giotto's works, if not his actual pupil, I must cite Tomaso, the author of the life of S. Sylvester in the Bardi chapel at S. Croce, one of the most remarkable works of the fourteenth century.

The history of this painter is very confused. Ghiberti names him simply 'Maso,' and asserts that he was a pupil of Giotto, adding that he was "nobilissimo e molto dotto," both in painting and sculpture, in which latter art he executed one of the

* The picture represents the Adoration of the Kings; the colouring is rich and the composition good, although rather crowded, but there is a degree of weakness in the heads, especially of the Virgin and child, and a clumsiness too and want of dignity throughout. The feet are concealed, except those of the infant Jesus. If by Stefano, it must be an early work; it certainly exhibits none of the characteristics noticed in the text. It was purchased at Florence. Rosini has engraved it, *Storia*, &c., tom. ii, p. 125.—The fresco in the 'Chiostro Verde' may be seen to the right as you descend into it from the Northern aisle of the nave of S. Maria Novella. It represents the Crucifixion, with S. Thomas Aquinas seated at the foot of the cross, scrolls branching off from it, enclosing heads of the Saints of the order, and small medallions representing miracles of S. Domenic and others,—the whole completely repainted.

statues of the Campanile,—that he was a man of "grandissimo ingegno," and that he had "moltissimi discepoli, [chi] furono tutti peritissimi maestri." —Vasari, on the other hand, informs us, though as a matter of repute rather than certainty, that he was the son of the painter Stefano, and born in 1326,—that, after receiving the first instructions from his father, he resolved, though in extreme youth, to imitate Giotto's manner in preference, which he acquired so completely that it was commonly said that the soul of Giotto had migrated into him, and he was popularly termed Giottino,—that he was of a melancholy and solitary disposition, passionately attached to his art, as anxious for fame as he was careless of riches and even of the necessaries of life, living in utter poverty and self-neglect,—that, after painting the life of S. Sylvester, and executing the tomb of Ubertino de' Bardi in S. Croce, and the Deposition at S. Remigi in or about 1343,* he visited Assisi, where he painted the Coronation of the Virgin, (now ascertained to be by another hand,) and certain miracles of S. Nicholas, in the Lower church, besides other frescoes in S. Chiara, which latter series were left unfinished in consequence of illness, which constrained him to return to Florence, —and that he died there soon afterwards, of consumption, at the age of thirty-two, leaving only one good pupil, Giovanni Tossicani, who painted in the

* In that year, on the expulsion of Walter Duke of Athens, he was employed to depict him and his adherents in opprobrious guise on the tower of the Bargello. *Vasari.*

same style and manner at Arezzo and throughout Tuscany, but seems to have left no succession:—Testimony which, however at first sight conflicting, may still perhaps be susceptible of reconciliation; while it is not to be overlooked, that Vasari may possibly have confounded the Maso of Ghiberti with a Giotto di M. Stefano, whose name (clearly baptismal) occurs in a roll of painters living in 1368.*—At all events, the frescoes remaining at Assisi, if attributable (as appears probable) to the author of the life of S. Sylvester at Florence, must, judging from their style and merit, be of prior execution. With these frescoes, therefore, we will commence our examination of the works of this artist—the Maso of Ghiberti, the Giottino of Vasari and of all subsequent writers.

The life of S. Nicholas will be found on the walls of the chapel at the extremity of the Southern transept of the Lower church of S. Francis. It has been much injured by time, but several of the compartments are still in good preservation. The composition is generally too scattered, but always simple and expressive; the restoration of a girl to her parents by S. Nicholas, who had ransomed her, is one of the most pleasing subjects.† But these frescoes are in-

* Cited by Baldinucci, *Notizie*, &c. tom. ii, p. 67, edit. *Manni*.

† The two uppermost representing the charity of S. Nicholas to the three poor maidens,—(see the legend in my notes to the life of Fra Angelico, *infra*,)—and his preservation of three innocent youths, unjustly condemned to execution, are also worth notice.

ferior to the series evidently by the same painter, in the chapel of the Magdalen, the third and last to the right of the nave, and which may be entered also from the Southern transept. The best of them is a repetition, as usual slightly varied, of Giotto's beautiful composition of the Resurrection of Lazarus. In the others the same want of unity and concentration of purpose is apparent. But there are many excellent figures, the drapery is good and the colouring remarkably agreeable to the eye. The manner is Giotto's, but without any attempt at foreshortening or the other kindred peculiarities which that master was accustomed to indulge in.*—Of the frescoes at S. Chiara all are obliterated except those on the groined vault, overhanging the choir; these, especially the Virgin with the child in her arms, and the figure of S. Chiara, struck me as superior to the frescoes in S. Francesco.

But the peculiar merits of Maso, the *venustà* or beauty, the majesty and the peculiar union or harmony of feeling and colouring for which the elder critics praise him, though recognisable at Assisi, are appreciable only at Florence,—where, however, the

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* The subjects represented are, 1. Mary kissing the feet of Our Saviour after anointing them; 2. The Resurrection of Lazarus; 3. The 'Noli me tangere;' 4. The Voyage of the Prince of Marseilles to Rome; 5. His wife lying dead on the island; 6. Mary Magdalen elevated in the air by angels; 7. Mary at the mouth of her cave, conversing with the solitary who gives her his robe; 8. Mary brought by angels to the church at Marseilles, and receiving the Eucharist from the Bishop Maximinus.

beautiful picture that bears his name in the gallery of the Academy, is evidently by another hand, and the Deposition at S. Remigi, attributed to him by Vasari, (a wreck, but full of feeling, and finished with extreme care, and certainly strongly resembling his style in fresco,) is assigned by Von Rumohr, on apparently sound arguments, to a later date.* Our admiration therefore must be restricted to the tomb of Ubertino de' Bardi and the life of S. Sylvester, in the Bardi chapel, the fifth to the left of the choir at S. Croce.

The tomb of Ubertino—a valiant Captain, and member of a family whose name was proverbial in those days for rank and dignity—is unique among the monuments of the fourteenth century. The architectural design is that of the Pisan school, to which, as a sculptor, Maso undoubtedly belongs; but, instead of the usual marble effigy recumbent on the sarcophagus, he has represented the deceased warrior rising from it at the summons of the last trumpet, while Our Saviour appears in the sky, coming in judgment, attended by angels blowing the trumpet and holding the instruments of the passion,—the sarcophagus is of stone, but all the rest within and beneath the arch, in fresco; the background is a rocky wilderness of mountains,—he rises in armour, a pale but composed countenance, his hands joined in prayer, feature and attitude alike expressive and

* The costume being that of the early part of the fifteenth century. He attributes it to Pietro Chelini. *Ital. Forschungen*, tom. ii, p. 173.

sublime. It is a daring and bold idea, and one only regrets that it has not been entirely wrought out in marble. The drawing is somewhat hard, and the colouring paler than in the adjacent frescoes, but in a subject like this such a defect becomes a merit.*

Of the frescoes representing the history of S. Sylvester, I am almost afraid of speaking too highly. They cover the right wall of the chapel, distributed in three rows, the two compartments of the uppermost depicting the Conversion of Constantine, the central one the miracle of the alternate death and resurrection of the bull, which converted his mother Helen,—the lowest, the victory of S. Sylvester over the dragon, in consequence of which, according to the legend, Constantine bestowed Rome and its territory on the Church, and abandoned Italy for Byzantium.—Of these, the miracle of the bull, which occupies the whole central space, is perhaps the most remarkable in point of composition; Constantine and the two philosophers, his assessors in judgment, sit enthroned in the centre,—the Jews and spectators stand behind the two balustrades to the right and left, while, in front, the bull is in the act of rising from its knees at the word of Sylvester. The story is excellently told, and the composition has been most happily adapted from one very frequently engraved on the consular diptychs of the Romans.†

* This tomb is engraved in the 'Monumenti Sepolcrali della Toscana,' tav. 4.

† See Agincourt, *Sculpture*, pl. 10, and Gori's *Thes. Vett. Diptych. passim.*

But the two in the lowest row, although much injured, are perhaps superior as regards the individual figures. To the left, Sylvester is seen binding the dragon's mouth, the two priests who accompanied him stopping their noses; to the right, he resuscitates the Magi, who are represented twice over, side by side in death, and rising again to life,—an artless expedient resorted to afterwards even by Ghiberti, Masaccio, and Andrea del Sarto. Constantine and his attendants look on behind the Magi. It is a very noble fresco, and a worthy termination to a series which for dignity and grandeur of composition, as well as the interest of the legend depicted in them, have few parallels in Italy. They have been described by M. Rio as "the sole work of the fourteenth century, which foreshadows the manner subsequently adopted by Masaccio in treating such subjects,"* a criticism which the recollection of certain frescoes at Padua, equally and in some respects still more beautiful, alone prevents me from unreservedly assenting to.

Before closing this first section, let me allude, however abruptly, to the plague of 1348, and its alleged injurious influence on art. I own I am not sensible to the rapid decadence which is considered to have taken place during the latter half of the fourteenth century;† and even were the fact established, I

* *De la Poésie Chrétienne*, p. 78.

† See Rio, Rosini, &c.

should be inclined to attribute it to the natural relaxation of exertion after a certain eminence has been attained, rather than to a visitation by which not one of the great contemporary artists appears to have suffered. On the contrary, the terror of the hour seems to have tended to the elevation rather than depression of painting, by drawing her votaries closer together, and enhancing that piety which is the life-blood of the art. Societies or Companies of painters were either formed or reorganised at this period at Florence and Siena,—not as academies, but simply as fraternities or congregations for mutual assistance and spiritual edification; regular religious exercises were prescribed, and in either city the Company was placed under the protection of S. Luke, the limner of the Virgin and especial patron of painters. The statutes of both institutions are preserved, and are very curious and characteristic of the rival schools: in the Florentine code the stress is laid on personal piety, in the Sienese on the religious vocation of the art; the tone of the latter is by far the loftier and more dignified, taking for granted the practice of those minuter acts of devotion which in the former are enumerated and enjoined with a simplicity and detail which it is as impossible to refrain from smiling at as to deride. But this distinction is native to the very constitution of the two schools, so essentially contemplative and dramatic,—and, to revert to the question on which we started, if there can be little doubt as to the beneficial effect of such societies on an art which soars to heaven or declines

to hell in exact proportion to the piety of its individual members, there can be as little surely as to the fact, that Painting was indebted for that benefit, more especially at Florence, to the very plague of 1348, which we commonly refer to as the greatest calamity it sustained in the fourteenth century.

SECTION 2. *School of Taddeo Gaddi—principal branch, at Florence, descended through Giovanni da Milano.*

REVERTING to Taddeo Gaddi, the more peculiar parent of the Florentine Giotteschi, we will trace his succession, first, in the more distinguished and progressive branch springing from Giovanni da Milano, or of Milan, whom, as I mentioned above, he selected, with a sage discrimination, as the instructor of his son Angelo.

Little or nothing is known personally of Giovanni,—but his great altar-piece, painted for the church of Ognissanti, and now hanging neglected and covered with dust and dirt in the chapel of the Northern transept, bears ample testimony to his talent; the expression is excellent, the colouring is rich and glowing, like the picture at S. Remigi attributed to Giottino.* Yet the frescoes on the vault

* The Pietà in the Academy at Florence, inscribed "Io Giovanni da Melano depinsi questa tavola, 1365," must surely be by another artist, and a most inferior one. The Saviour is ignoble in form and feature, the grief of the Virgin caricatured,

of the Southern transept in the Lower church at Assisi are still superior; they represent the early history of Our Saviour; the composition is admirable, the story told at a glance, the accessary objects or persons are well chosen and few, the faces and attitudes full of expression and even beauty, the drapery is dignified and noble, the colouring soft as well as rich, and a certain natural grace prevails throughout, which is very winning. I may cite the Adoration of the Kings, the Purification and the Dispute with the Doctors, as examples of his composition, and the Massacre of the Innocents for an expression and feeling in the groups of agonised mothers, not inferior to Giotto himself.*

Two frescoes adjacent to these (on either side of the arch of the window, and beneath the Annunciation) are also attributed to Giovanni. They represent a miracle of S. Francis. A boy had been killed at Suessa by the fall of a house; the mother, full of faith, vowed a new *sindon*, or linen cloth, to cover S. Francis's altar if he would restore her son to life; about midnight he revived.†—The one fresco represents the lament over the corpse, the other S. Francis resuscitating the youth in an upper chamber,

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the design stiff and hard, the colouring dark and black, the conception altogether vulgar and prosaic.

* "Ce tableau," says Rio, speaking of the Adoration of the Kings, "a servi comme prélude aux merveilles de l'école Ombrienne, et Rumohr pense que Raphael lui-même en aura subi au moins médiatement l'influence." *De la Poésie Chrétienne*, p. 77.

† See Bonaventura's life of S. Francis, p. 150, edit. 1710.

and a friend, followed by the mother holding the sindon, descending the steps of the house to announce the event to the anxious crowd without. Both are excellent.

We know so little about Giovanni that it is but vain speculation attempting to account for his having confined his labour to the Southern transept, leaving the conclusion of his life of Christ to a later painter. Death, or dissatisfaction, or a summons elsewhere, might be suggested with equal plausibility; all that we know is, that he was painting at Milan, his native town, in or about 1371,* but though probably executed before that epoch, no evidence I believe has yet been adduced to prove it. He found, however, no unworthy successor in the author of the series depicting the Passion of Our Lord in the Northern transept. Vasari attributes these latter frescoes to Capanna, but their style (as I remarked above) negatives such an ascription. Compared with Giovanni's, they are more rich, more copious, and less simple in

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* *Rosini, Storia, &c.*, tom. ii, p. 202.—Rosini attributes to Giovanni the frescoes beneath the cupola of the church of Chiaravalle, near Milan,—they did not give me that impression; the colouring is whiter than the frescoes by Giovanni at Assisi and his altar-piece at the Ognissanti, and I should have thought them rather by Taddeo. The subjects represented are the Annunciation, the Death of the Virgin, her Funeral procession and her Coronation, or rather installation by Our Saviour as Queen of Heaven. This Badia of Chiaravalle, or Clairvaux, founded by S. Bernard, is worth visiting on account of the characteristic and picturesque octagonal central tower, which rises above the cupola. It may be reached in less than an hour, a pleasant evening drive through green lanes.

composition; the faces are less expressive, and altogether they rank among the most modern in style of the frescoes of the fourteenth century; still they are extremely pleasing,—there is much dignity, much sweet and true feeling in them, and yet Giovanni's go more to the heart. The colouring is peculiar, resembling that of the adjacent Crucifixion by Cavallini, and of the succession of Duccio at Siena, from which I suspect the author of being a proselyte. It is not unworthy of notice that the life of S. Martin in this same Lower church of S. Francis, an undoubted work of the Sienese Simon di Memmo, is attributed by Vasari to Capanna.

Returning to the Val d'Arno, we find Angelo Gaddi undisputed prince of painting at Florence during the latter years of the third quarter of the century. He ruled, however, less through personal merit than the deference paid him as his father's son, and is an exception to the law of progress which otherwise prevails throughout the succession. His first work created great expectations, which the productions of his maturer age cruelly disappointed; deficient in original genius, working for amusement and from a feeling of pride in the hereditary talent of his family rather than a genuine love of the art, his efforts were unequal and his success uncertain, and with the exception of such interjectional flashes as the blame bestowed on his more laboured works provoked, his career was one of continual decadence. Nevertheless he is far from meriting absolute censure,—his heads are often expressive and truthful, his

figures graceful, and his colouring pleasing, though very pale; these merits, together with a general movement, and a great deal of life in the individual figures, atone for bad drawing and great confusion of composition in the History of the Invention of the Cross, painted by him in fresco on the opposite walls of the choir of S. Croce,* while the same characteristics, with a decrease of force and accession of elegance, are observable in the frescoes of the Cappella della Cintola at Prato, a series remarkable for the Byzantine reminiscences in the earlier and inferior portion consecrated to the life of the Virgin, while the latter, detailing the history of her girdle subsequent to its revelation to European eyes in distant Palestine,† is so graceful amidst its

* The subjects are as follows:—On the Southern wall, beginning from the top, 1. Seth receiving the branch of the tree of life from the angel and planting it on the breast of Adam; 2. The burial of the mysterious tree by order of Solomon, and the Queen of Sheba's adoration of it, while serving as a bridge; 3. The tree taken out of the Pool of Bethesda and shaped into the Cross of Our Saviour; 4. The Invention of the Cross by Queen Helen, and the restoration of the dying woman:—On the Northern wall, 1. The Cross carried in procession by Queen Helen and adored by the people; 2. The Invasion of Cosrhoes and the capture of the Cross; 3. The Victory of Heraclius over the son of Cosrhoes at the bridge, and Cosrhoes seated on his throne in the tower,[a]—and 4. Heraclius carrying the Cross into Jerusalem, at first on horseback, afterwards, being admonished by the angel, on foot.

† A youth of Prato, Michele dei Dagomari, visiting Palestine in 1096, married the youthful daughter of a Greek priest, in whose family the girdle had been preserved from time imme-

[a] The apparition of an angel to Heraclius, sleeping, is also represented, but this is probably through a confusion of his legend with that of Constantine.

inaccuracies, and derives from the romance of the legend so much interest of an extrinsic nature, that, standing on the spot, one really feels indisposed for criticism. The colouring too is warmer and more attractive; the whole series having been freshly but most scrupulously restored by Signor Marini, one might fancy the artist had but just laid down his pencil. The chapel was built in 1365, but the girdle was not transferred to it till 1395,*—the frescoes were most probably executed shortly after the former epoch.

We are not informed of the date of Angelo's death; during his latter years he is said to have established a commercial house at Venice, and if so, he probably worked in Lombardy; but the pale whitish colouring of the early Giotteschi in that part of Italy, which might on first thoughts be imputed

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morial; being very poor, they bestowed it upon her as her dowry, and Michele brought it with him to Italy. The tenth compartment of the series represents his marriage, and the eleventh the voyage home; in the twelfth, he disembarks with his wife at Pisa, and is seen thereafter in his chamber awakened by two angels in reproof of his having slept on the girdle for security, fearing lest it should be stolen from him; in the thirteenth, lying on his death-bed, he commits the relic to the care of the priest Uberto, who receives it on his knees, and subsequently transfers it to the Cathedral. See the little tract 'Delle Pitture che adornano la Cappella del Sacro Cingolo di M. Vergine nella Cattedrale di Prato,' and also Rio, 'De la Poésie Chrétienne,' p. 80.—This legend is purely Western; the history of the girdle, according to the Greek church, is told in the Menologion, tom. iii, p. 225. There is a rival girdle at Tortosa in Spain, brought down from heaven in 1178.

* Inscription recently put up in the chapel.

to his influence, was inherited, I think, from the original native Roman succession, which I have already repeatedly alluded to.

A few of Angelo's easel-pictures may still be seen at Florence, but they are mediocre and feeble productions.* Like Stefano and Taddeo Gaddi, he is now known only by his inferior works, which certainly, considered by themselves, would not warrant us in ranking him among the luminaries of the fourteenth century.

But if Angelo's credit as a painter fall below the average of his immediate predecessors, he redeems it amply as the teacher of Antonio Veneziano. This distinguished painter came young to Florence, expressly to place himself under Angelo, and after completing his studies, returned to Venice in hopes of obtaining employment there.† He was appointed to paint one of the walls of the Sala del Gran Consiglio,‡ and succeeded admirably, but Venice never felt sympathetically towards the Giotteschi,—other styles were in vogue, and the jealous intrigues of the artists whom his success would have supplanted, obliged him to quit the field. He went back to Florence, where his return was welcomed as warmly

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* *E. g.* the Virgin and child attended by Saints, with the history of the Madonna in small compartments below, in the Academy,—an Annunciation, and a gradino in small compartments, in the gallery of the Uffizj, &c.

† *Vasari.*

‡ Destroyed in the fire of 1576.

as his departure had been regretted, his talents and virtues having alike endeared him to the citizens,—and his country knew him no more.

Of his works none survive him except the frescoes in the Campo Santo,—unless indeed we attribute to him the exquisite picture in the Academy at Florence, there ascribed to Giottino, representing the Vision of S. Bernard; the scene is the garden of the monastery,—the Saint kneels at his desk, the pen in his hand, while he gazes on the apparition of the Virgin, attended by two angels, floating on the air with most ethereal grace and beauty; her face is lovely, and the numerous small compartments which surround this central composition, finished like miniatures, are little less excellent in their way. Dignity and expression prevail throughout, the long eye of Giotto is frequently observable, and the colouring is rich, with a strong tinge of blue, which also prevails in the frescoes of Pisa,—although it is on the general style of feeling and composition that I should be inclined to claim this stray credit for Antonio.*

Turning to the Campo Santo, let me preface our inspection of Antonio's frescoes by a remark on the principle which seems to have governed the selection of artists for the decoration of that venerable cloister,

* It has close affinity in some respects with the works of Orcagna and Fra Angelico, of the Semi-Byzantine succession at Florence. The compositions on the predella are six in number; the first represents the rescue of Placidus from drowning by Maurus, at the command of S. Benedict,—I am not certain of the import of the remaining compositions.

usually although most erroneously reckoned, next to Assisi, the great sanctuary of Giottesque painting. Ninety years, in fact, seem to have intervened between the completion of the building and the first employment of a Giottesco,—an exclusive singularity imputable, not so much (I think) to jealousy of Florence, as to a warmer sympathy with the elder semi-Byzantine schools, from which Buffalmacco and Orcagna, Pietro di Lorenzo, Pietro di Puccio of Orvieto, and others—the contemporaries of Giotto, Taddeo, Stefano, Giottino, Giovanni da Milano and Angelo Gaddi—were successively and by preference invited to Pisa. The history of Job, commonly attributed to Giotto, but painted in 1371 by Francesco da Volterra, is in fact the earliest work of the Giotteschi in the Campo Santo,* and these frescoes of Antonio, executed in 1387 and 1388,† appear to have been the second. And it is not a little remarkable that of the two artists, Spinello Aretino and Benozzo Gozzoli, who subsequently worked there, the former had more sympathy with the Sienese than any of his contemporaries, and the latter was the pupil of the heir of the elder Semi-Byzantine school of Florence—the Dominican Fra Angelico.‡

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* *Vide supra*, p. 168.

† See the contemporary record of their payment, in Ciampi, *Notizie Inedite, &c.*, p. 151. He was paid seventy florins for each of the three frescoes.

‡ For the series of the artists employed in the Campo Santo, as gathered from contemporary records, see the above-cited work of Professor Ciampi.

This distinction established, and the fact premised that a pupil of Simon of Siena had many years before represented in three large frescoes the early incidents in the history of S. Ranier, the patron Saint of Pisa —to wit, his conversion, his reception of the monastic robe at Jerusalem, and his temptations and miracles in the Holy land—we are at liberty to trace the subsequent events of the legend in the three frescoes painted beneath them by Antonio, completing the series. They have been sadly injured, but will well repay the examination.

The first of the three represents the Return of S. Ranier to Pisa. To the left, the vessel is seen on its voyage, but this part of the fresco is nearly effaced. In the centre is depicted a miracle of the Saint at Messina; a tavern-keeper, whom he exhorted to abandon the dishonest practice of mingling water with his wine, denying the charge, he bade him empty a *fiascone* into the lap of his robe; the water fell through to the ground, and the pure wine remained behind. He then showed him the devil sitting in the shape of a cat on the barrel from which he had drawn the adulterated liquor, and watching for his soul. The attitudes and expression of the Saint and the sinner (the latter, a gross corpulent vintner) are admirably imagined, as well as the by-play of the spectators.—Lastly, towards the extreme right, S. Ranier is seen feasted by the canons of Pisa after his arrival in his native city.

The second compartment represents the Death of S. Ranier, his Funeral Procession, and his appear-

ance to and cure of the paralytic Roediger, the Teuton. To the left, he lies extended in death, in front of the Monastery of S. Vito, surrounded by the monks and priests, a group of women kissing his hands and kneeling at his feet, all admirably diversified in character and expression; above, his soul is seen carried by angels to heaven. To the right, his remains are being borne to the Cathedral in solemn procession, the ecclesiastical character given to the life; while between these two extremities of the fresco rises a stately palace, within which, in an upper room, S. Ranier appears to Roediger, lying sick and infirm on his couch, and taking the hand which he bids him stretch out to him, raises him up and restores him to health and strength. A group of men, women and children gathered below the palace seem to listen to a person who descends to announce the miracle.* There is a resemblance in this part of the composition to the miracle of S. Francis represented by Giovanni da Milano at Assisi.

In the third and last fresco are depicted various posthumous miracles of S. Ranier. To the left, his body lies exposed before the high altar, while the lame, the blind, the dropsical, are grouped in front, awaiting their cure through his intercession,—some of these figures are admirable; to the right, besides other less notable miracles performed at sea, a ship

* 'Vita di S. Ranieri,' &c., edited from an ancient manuscript, and translated by Fra Gius. M. Sanminiatelli, *Pisa*, fol. 1755, p. 310.

is seen labouring in the storm, the sailors adjusting the sails and throwing over the bales and baggage to lighten her, while S. Ranier floats in the air above, guiding her to her destination.*

These frescoes are described by Vasari as the best of all those in the Campo Santo; setting aside the profound thought of those of Orcagna and the boundless variety and life of Benozzo's, they deserve the preference. But in many points Antonio falls behind his Giottesque predecessors and contemporaries. He is inferior in grace to Taddeo, in grandeur to Giottino, in elegance to Giovanni da Milano, in composition to the author of the Passion of Christ at Assisi, and to the Giotteschi of Padua; on the other hand, he surpasses them all in his delineation of nature,—his principal figures are, in character and action, most dramatic, and his attitudes of common life, those especially of his mariners in the storm, are new and excellent in their way; while his sensibility to all that is grand and beautiful in nature and art sheds that general richness of effect over his compositions which fascinates us in the pictures of the later Venetian school; his landscape indeed exhibits

* *Vita, &c.*, p. 308.—These frescoes are engraved by Lasinio the elder in the 'Pitture a fresco del Campo Santo,' &c., 1812; and are described at length in the excellent little 'Descrizione del Campo Santo' by Professor Rosini. The original authority is the 'Vita di S. Ranieri,' &c., cited above. I do not however observe in the 'Vita' the story of the vintner at Messina, which I have given from the 'Descrizione' of Rosini,—nor in the 'Descrizione' the cure of Roediger the Teuton, which is only to be found in the 'Vita.'

no improvement,—nothing can be more rude; but the trees rising over his palaces, and the birds perched on the roofs, are the hints which Benozzo subsequently amplified so richly; and although his architectural backgrounds are less correct in perspective and proportion than those of his contemporaries of Padua, they surpass them in magnificence. Antonio had another distinguishing merit; he coloured always *al fresco*, once for all, that is to say, without retouching *al secco*, or on the dry plaister in tempera, the universal and less commendable practice of Angelo Gaddi's school;* to this we may attribute the superior freshness and preservation of his works even at the present day.

After leaving Pisa, Antonio was employed by the Acciajuoli in the monastery of the Certosa near Florence, founded by Niccola, of that family, the celebrated Seneschal of Naples; but of these, his latest works, none have been preserved. Soon afterwards, spell-bound by the perusal of Dioscorides, he abandoned painting, and applying himself to the study of herbs and of medicine, became as good a physician as he had been a painter. He died, it is supposed, towards the close of the century, leaving two pupils, Starnina, who continued the succession,

* The testimony of Cennino Cennini, pupil of Angelo, seems conclusive on this point:—"E nota che ogni cosa che lavori a fresco vuole essere tratto a fine e ritoccato in secco con tempera." Cap. 77, p. 74, edit. *Tambroni*.—Was Antonio's practice, then, an innovation of his own, or was it common to him and the Semi-Byzantine succession, with which he had in many respects such close affinity?

and (if Vasari may be trusted) Uccello, a much younger man, hereafter to be noticed as one of the fathers of the Second Period of Italian painting.

Gherardo Starnina was born at Florence in 1354, and passed several years in the bottega of Antonio. Setting up for himself, he was employed by the Castellani family to decorate their chapel in S. Croce with the lives of S. Antonio Abate and S. Nicholas, —works no longer existing, but the Evangelists on the groined roof may still be admired; each is attended by his emblem, the eagle serving as S. John's desk, the ox at the feet of S. Matthew holding his pen, the lion of S. Mark his gospel, utilitarianisms less praiseworthy than the heads, attitudes and drapery of the Evangelists themselves, which are full of dignity. The colouring too is very deep and rich, reminding one of that of Niccolò and Bertolino on the cupola of the Baptistery at Parma.

These frescoes gave so much satisfaction that certain Spaniards, then visiting Florence, carried him to Spain, and obtained him employment from their king; he was glad to go, a rugged and quarrelsome temper having involved him in so many feuds that his life was no longer safe. But after passing several years in Spain,* he returned to Florence another

* The walls of a Gothic cloister of the Cathedral of Toledo, erected in 1389, were "painted in fresco in the style of Giotto, with subjects which are described by Ortiz, (ch. 52,) who particularly specifies groups of hereties burning... These extraordinary and almost unique specimens of art in the fourteenth

man, the pink of courtesy and politeness, and his former enemies were so conciliated by this change of deportment that they became his firmest and most attached friends.*

Soon afterwards he painted the chapel of S. Jerome in the Carmine, destroyed in the great fire of 1771; an engraving of one of the frescoes, the Testament of S. Jerome, may be seen in the work of Count Seroux d'Agincourt,†—it makes one vividly regret their loss. Certain foreign costumes, introduced from his Spanish portfolio, were much admired, and they were full of new ideas; Vasari's description of the school-boy horsed, in the school-scene, S. Jerome's first introduction into public life, is most amusing, and the group probably suggested that in the life of S. Augustine, at S. Gimignano, by Benozzo, a painter who, I suspect, owed much both to Starnina and his master, Antonio. Starnina had in fact inherited the cosmopolite eye of Antonio Veneziano, and of the still elder Stefano and Giotto, and seems to have looked on common nature with that earnest love which can never betray so long as it does not unduly supplant our reverence for the lofty and the ideal.

Starnina survived the year 1406, but the date of his death is uncertain. He left only one distinguished

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century were all effaced in 1775 by the barbarian Chapter." *Ford's Handbook for Spain*, p. 848. Possibly these may have been by Starnina.

* *Vasari.*

† *Peinture*, pl. 121.

disciple, Masolino da Panicale, through whom this loftier and progressive line of the Giottesque school, successively represented by Taddeo Gaddi, Giovanni da Milano, Angelo Gaddi, Antonio and himself, far from becoming extinct, dilated into Masaccio.

The last collateral descendants of this branch were Don Lorenzo degli Angeli and Cennino Cennini, characters strongly contrasted both as men and artists, the former, though still Giottesque, anticipating in the most singular manner several of the characteristics of the later school of Umbria, the latter adhering with fond affection to the antiquated rules and practice of his master, Angelo Gaddi, from which his fellow-pupil Antonio and Starnina had so happily dissented.

Don Lorenzo was a Camaldolese monk, belonging to the monastery of the Angeli at Florence, a community much celebrated for its painters in miniature, an art ever in favour with the Benedictines.* His own studies seem to have been on Taddeo Gaddi and Giottino rather than the more recent masters, though he had profited by all the subsequent improvement; his design is excellent, his colouring rich and glowing, inclining even to reddish, and strongly

* The illuminations of the choir-books preserved in the 'Libreria' of the Duomo at Siena—a most exquisite series—appear to be of the same school; at least they bear a strong resemblance to the works of Don Lorenzo.—The history of painting in miniature is one of those minor but most interesting branches of art which still await their respective historians. Much, however, has been done to prepare the way in this department.

resembling that of his contemporary, Gentile da Fabriano, the last of the Umbrian Giotteschi, and even that of Perugino and the more recent painters of that country, while his sweet and simple composition and the peculiar modesty, grace and spirituality of his Virgins constantly remind one of Fra Angelico. The spirit of Christianity and of the contemplative race of painters seems to have possessed him wholly; and this may account for the few relics still preserved of him being all in tempera,—none are even mentioned in fresco. Of these works one, highly praised but which I have not seen, dated 1413, is preserved in the church of Cerreto, (near Certaldo, the retreat of Boccaccio,)—another, singularly beautiful, an Annunciation, with a gradino of small subjects, in the Salimbeni chapel, the fourth to the South of the nave, in the Trinità at Florence; the Annunciation in the South transept of S. Lorenzo may perhaps be a third, and a fourth, in three compartments, in which the long Giottesque eye is remarkable as in the pictures of Gentile, may be seen at Berlin,—of no great force, but very pleasing, simple and dignified. The finish in all these pictures is most minute, yet free from the pettiness into which miniaturists are so apt to degenerate when working in large. Don Lorenzo was certainly an artist of progress, but of progress uncongenial to the Giotteschi, on whom he seems to have exerted no influence whatever.

Reverting to Cennino, one is sensible of a retrogression, as it were, of a century. And yet his name has an interest attached to it, peculiar in its kind. Of

his works in painting none remain,* but he has bequeathed to us a most precious memoir or treatise on his art, the faithful record of the traditions he had inherited from the "tre grandi," as he repeatedly calls them, the Lares of his veneration, Giotto, Taddeo Gaddi, and Angelo, to whose honoured memory —second only to "the glory of God, Our Lady, S. Eustace, S. Francis, the Baptist, S. Antony of Padua, and generally of all the Saints of God"—the work is solemnly dedicated.—In recommending its perusal, I can promise none of the little anecdotes or traits of character which render Ghiberti's few pages so valuable, but it does what they do not,—it admits the reader into the bottega of the artist, invites him within the screen by which the painters of those early days fenced themselves and their mysteries off from the uninitiated eye; the mechanism described is professedly that of Giotto, and the few maxims as to manners and discipline scattered through the volume, are alike referable to the standard of opinion which his precepts and practice had established. We read, for instance—after a preliminary and favourable dis-

* In the chapel of the 'Confreria della Croce del Giorno,' adjacent to the church of S. Francesco, at Volterra, are a series of frescoes representing the Invention of the Cross, the Massacre of the Innocents, &c., which probably belong to the Florentine succession of Angelo Gaddi; they are attributed by M. Valery to Cenni di Francesco di Ser Cenni, a painter of whom I have found no notice elsewhere. Though not absolutely without merit, they are crowded in composition, exaggerated in expression and cold in colouring, and might well be taken for the works of one like Cennino, who had survived, or rather been left in the rear by his contemporaries.

tinction between painters attracted to the art by the "animo gentile" of natural predisposition, (to whom he peculiarly addresses himself,) and those whose love of gain is their sole inspiration—that Love, Fear, Obedience and Perseverance ought to be the Cardinal virtues of the artist, to be worn as a robe of grace and honour in the presence of the master under whom he places himself,—that his master should be the best living artist,—that he should divide his allegiance with no one else,—that he should continually copy from his works, as well as from the living models of nature,* confident that, unless his intellect be gross indeed, he will thus acquire something at least of his master's manner, while if Nature has endowed him with a "punta di fantasia," a spark of genius, he will ultimately create a new and original one, the hand and mind naturally refusing to gather thorns after spending their prime in culling roses.—During this period of discipline, proceeds Cennino, his life should be regular and temperate, like that of students in theology or philosophy,—his food light and taken twice only in the day, and with little wine,—his walks solitary, unless a congenial soul be his companion,—and he should abstain from violent exercises, such as hurling the stone, the bar of iron, &c., which render the hand heavy and sluggish in responding to the mind, as well as from sensual indulgences of the grosser kind, which render it "lighter, fleeter and more ungovernable than the leaf before the wind."

* He says nothing of the antique.

He prolongs the period of discipleship to thirteen years,—the first, "da piccino," to be spent in drawing, so as to acquire some general preliminary notions of correct proportion; the next six, in mastering the pure mechanism of the craft, the grinding and mixing of colours, the preparation of glues, the art of taking casts, of preparing the plaister for pictures in tempera, of laying on gold for the backgrounds, and engraining them, &c.; and the remaining six, in the study of design—thenceforth to be his first object and unremitted pursuit, day and night, fast and feast-day.

The remainder of the work—with the exception of a chapter of advice to the young ladies of Tuscany, not to use medicated waters for the skin, but to be content with the unadulterated dew of nature—is purely technical and beyond the mere amateur, but to the artist-student it must be most interesting. It concludes with a prayer to God, the Virgin, S. John, S. Luke, &c., for grace and fortitude to support in patience the burden of the sorrow of this world, and for those who read his work, grace to understand and memory to profit by it, "so that by the sweat of their brow they may live in peace and maintain their families in this life present, and finally obtain everlasting glory in the life to come, "per infinita sæcula sæculorum, Amen!"—expressions on which a painful light is thrown by the final colophon or epigraph, dated from the Stinche, the prison for debt at Florence, in 1437, exactly a century after

the death of Giotto.*—Superseded in his profession by artists of the new school, and unable or unwilling to accommodate his practice to theirs with the facility of his contemporaries, poverty doubtless whitened his hair and dug his grave, though powerless to deprive him of that modesty, integrity, resignation, manly cheerfulness and unobtrusive piety, which cradles, as in a casket of cedar and gold, the "Trattato della Pittura,"—this dying legacy of the man who, in his amiable but blind idolatry of the past, might be fitly styled the Last of the Giotteschi.

SECTION 3.—*School of Taddeo Gaddi—inferior branch, Florence and Tuscany, descended through Giacomo da Casentino.*

WE have still, however, to trace the fortunes of the contemporary Tuscan branch of the school of Taddeo Gaddi, which derives from Giacomo da Casentino. Its chief claim to our respect consists in having produced Spinello Spinelli, one of the most remarkable painters of the fourteenth century. It is, in truth, the senior and direct line of the Giottesque succession in Tuscany, but in the genealogy of art, like

* The 'Trattato della Pittura' was published for the first time, with valuable notes, but from an incorrect transcript[a] by the Cav. Gius. Tambroni, *Rome*, 8vo, 1821. It has just been translated into English, with illustrations, by Mrs. Merrifield.

[a] The original MS. is preserved in the Laurentian library at Florence.

that of Scripture, it will often be found that the heirship of the promise passes over the head of the elder to settle on that of the younger and more deserving brother.*

Little is known of Giacomo's history. He was a native of Prato Vecchio, a town in the Casentino, and, according to Vasari, was placed under Taddeo Gaddi by the Guardiano, or superior, of the Franciscan convent at Laverna, while the latter was working there. In 1349, when the Company of painters was organised at Florence, Giacomo was appointed one of the two councillors, and employed to paint the altar-piece of the chapel. But of all his works, some prophets on the square columns of the Orsanmichele, probably painted several years earlier, and soon after the conversion of the Loggia into a church by his master Taddeo, have alone been preserved, and very weak and feeble they are, both in expression, colouring and design. He painted much in his latter years in the Casentino and at Arezzo, and died, after attaining the age of four-score, at his birth-place, Prato Vecchio.†

Of far higher genius was Spinello, a native of Arezzo, but the son of an exiled Ghibelline of Florence. He was placed under Giacomo during a

* I suspect that both Angelo Gaddi and his succession derive their descent, partially, from the elder Roman school, so often spoken of. This would account *inter alia* for their peculiarly pale colouring.

† *Vasari.*—The painter Bernardo Daddi also belongs to the same class.

residence of the latter at Arezzo, and soon surpassed him. The works of Margaritone also seem to have made a strong impression on him; various paintings, productions apparently of his younger days, strongly resemble those of his venerable predecessor, and certain Byzantine peculiarities, which he retained through life, were probably thus inherited.

After attaining considerable reputation in his native city and its neighbourhood, Spinello repaired to Florence, where his Ghibelline descent proved no hindrance to his success; he was much employed there, but all his works have been destroyed except the frescoes in the sacristy of S. Miniato, and a portion of those executed for Leo degli Acciajuoli in the monastery of S. Maria Novella. The former, according to Vasari, were painted shortly after 1361 for the Abbot, a native of Arezzo, and probably the patron who originally invited him to Florence. They represent, in sixteen compartments, the life of S. Benedict, besides the four Evangelists on the ceiling, each distinguished by his symbolic attendant looking up at him; these Evangelists are full of fire and dignity, equal to the best of the frescoes on the walls, and much superior to the worst, which last, therefore, (the ceiling being always painted first,) I conclude to be by another hand, although there is much general resemblance in the style. To this inferior painter I should attribute the first eight, the eleventh and twelfth of the series, and the ninth and tenth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth, only, to Spinello. These latter frescoes are extremely

good, the composition is for the most part highly expressive, the S. Benedict very dignified, and the monkish character is given throughout with admirable truth and fidelity, while it is wonderful how he has contrived to vary and contrast the shades of flesh-colour and of white, the prevailing hue of the Benedictine dress, so as to avoid monotony. Totila's visit of humiliation to S. Benedict is perhaps the most striking composition; he throws himself on his knees before the Saint, who rises from his seat, under the porch of his monastery, to receive him. Both figures are admirable, and the conception of this scene is superior to that which I shall hereafter have to describe in the very interesting life of S. Benedict by the Neapolitan Zingaro. This and the concluding subject, the Death of S. Benedict, Spinello, on taking the brush from his (presumed) coadjutor, reserved for the space below the two first frescoes of the series, on the wall facing the door of entrance into the sacristy, in order that they might enjoy the full light pouring in from the window to the left. The ninth subject therefore in the historical series must be sought for beneath the third, painted on the right-hand wall, as you enter.*

* The subjects are, very briefly, as follows:—1. (Beginning with the upper row on the wall opposite the entrance,) the departure of S. Benedict and his nurse for the wilderness,—he is usually represented as a mere child in the frescoes that represent this incident; 2. The restoration of the broken sieve; 3. S. Benedict's reception of the monastic habit from Romanus, and the devil throwing a stone at the bell communicating with his cave; 4. The Appearance of Our Saviour to the priest, and the

Of the frescoes at S. Maria Novella, the sole relics are a series representing the Passion of Our Lord, on the walls of the 'Stanza delle Acque,' a small chapel or oratory, now no longer used as such, and attached to the 'Farmacia' of the monastery. The traditional compositions are adhered to very closely —in the Crucifixion, for instance, the feet of Our Saviour rest on a suppeditaneum, as in the oldest Byzantine paintings—but there is expression and feeling in the treatment; the most original subject is Our Saviour's discourse to his Apostles, all standing up, after the Last Supper, in the lunette on the right wall.

It does not appear in what year Spinello returned to Arezzo, but he was working there in 1383, and it was probably about that time that he painted the Annunciation in S. Francesco, one of his few works not in fresco.* It is a very beautiful picture, the

Easter-feast of the latter with S. Benedict; 5. S. Benedict's penance, rolling himself among thorns; 6. S. Benedict detecting the poisoned wine-cup; 7. S. Benedict quitting the monastery; 8. S. Benedict receiving Maurus and Placidus from their parents, as his disciples; 9. (the first in chronological order of the lower row, beginning on the right-hand wall, under No. 3—) The Recovery of the monk who had been crushed under the wall of the new monastery; 10. The young monk drawn by the devil out of the church; 11. S. Benedict recovering the head of the bill-hook; 12. Placidus rescuing Maurus from drowning at the command of S. Benedict; 13. S. Benedict detecting the devil seated on the stone that the builders of the new monastery could not lift; 14. The pseudo-Totila detected by S. Benedict; 15. Totila's visit to S. Benedict; 16. The death of S. Benedict, and the vision to the two monks of S. Benedict's pathway to heaven.

* It will be found in the nave, over the fifth altar on the right hand.

composition probably that of Cavallini, the style reminding one not a little of Fra Angelico; the Virgin is very graceful and sweet, and this picture comes nearer than any other of his surviving works to Vasari's description of his manner in painting such subjects, always, he says, imparting to them "an indescribable something of holiness and divinity, which induces reverence from man,"—a success attained by few or none of the purely dramatic artists.

Spinello was by this time an elderly man and longed for tranquillity, but the civil dissensions of those days involved young and old alike in the whirlpool; the feuds between the Guelphs and Ghibellines burst out again at Arezzo,—the demons of faction resumed their wild dance over the city, and no S. Francis appeared to lay them in the Red Sea. Spinello therefore removed with his family to Florence, where he had many friends and relations. He had spent some time there, working but little, and for recreation rather than emolument, when he received an invitation to paint in the Campo Santo at Pisa, whither he removed his tent accordingly, probably in 1388 or 1389, just as Antonio Veneziano was bringing his works there to a termination.

Three only of the six frescoes executed by Spinello on this occasion, remain, and in a sadly injured condition. They represent the history of S. Ephesus. The appearance of Our Saviour to him on his expedition against the Christians, as general of Diocle-sian, in the first large compartment, and his battle with the Pagans of Sardinia in the second, are full

of fire and spirit, both men and horses are energetic and daring to a degree, although frequently uncouth from the very novelty of the groups and attitudes which the artist has attempted to delineate. The colouring is extremely good, with something of a Sienese tinge, unnoticeable in his early works at Florence, where the pale tints of Giacomo da Casentino and his school prevail, but which is perceptible also, if I mistake not, though in a less degree, in his last great series of frescoes, at Siena. Indeed, on analysing one's impressions, one is conscious of a latent but decided inward sympathy between Spinello and the Semi-Byzantine schools, independent of those external resemblances already alluded to; and this may account for what may indeed be considered a marvel, the employment of a Giottesco by the Sienese, as well as for the preference accorded him by the conservators of the Campo Santo. These frescoes were finished before the 31st of March, 1392, the date of his receipt for the payment, as engrossed in the books of the 'Opera del Duomo.'*

Spinello had begun working in the church of S. Francesco at Pisa, when the commotions consequent on the murder of Pietro Gambacorti, Signor of the city, in October, that same year, again constrained him to remove. He went back to Florence, and after remaining a year there, returned once more to Arezzo, anxious to spend the remnant of his days

* *Ciampi, Notizie Inedite, &c.*, p. 192.—They are described minutely in the 'Descrizione' by Professor Rosini, and are engraved in the 'Pitture a fresco del Campo Santo,' &c., 1812.

(being then in his seventy-seventh year) in his native town. He was received with open arms, and resided there, except during his visit to Siena, for the remainder of his life, caressed and honoured by every one. He had accumulated wealth, but his enthusiasm for art, increasing with his years, gave him no repose, and he may be said to have died with the brush in his hand.

He was in his ninetieth year when invited to Siena to paint the 'Sala della Balia' in the Palazzo Pubblico. The decoration of this chamber had been in the first instance entrusted to Fra Martino di Bartolommeo, a native artist, who painted the emblematical virtues on the groined ceiling; but towards the close of 1407, the work was taken out of his hands and made over to Spinello, who completed it with the assistance of his son Parri, an artist of merit, though unequal to his father.* The frescoes represent the great struggle between the Papacy and the Empire, under the Popes Adrian IV. and Alexander III., and Frederick III., surnamed Barbarossa,—and have a peculiar interest as the earliest existing type of those cycles of historical composition, in which the events are selected less from their individual picturesqueness than from their illustration of some grand principle or problem in the progress of society, and this in combination and as tending to a catastrophe.

* See the commission as printed by Dellavalle in the 'Lettere Sanesi,' tom. ii, p. 233.

The chamber is parted into two divisions by a transverse arch, the sides of which are painted as well as the walls; each division is lighted by a window to the left; the series commences on the wall immediately to the right on entering, opposite the first window, and is carried round to the wall on the other side of the arch, similarly opposite the second. The drama opens with the Coronation of Pope Adrian in 1154, and his Investiture of Barbarossa with the sword of empire, the following year, at Rome. This is followed, in the first lunette on the entrance wall, by the Quarrel of Barbarossa and Adrian in 1157, which Spinello has, with daring freedom, represented as personal instead of distant and epistolary,—it is perhaps the most dramatic composition in the whole series; the Pope, seated on his throne, turns contemptuously to a Cardinal on his left, as if appealing to him in his altercation with the Emperor, who stands before him, clenching his fist, turning indignantly away as about to leave his presence; the Cardinals expostulate with the Pope—his own followers fume with passion behind the Emperor—nothing can be more graphic. Next to this follows the storming of the Arca Romana in the siege of Milan the following year, 1158,—and the series is thenceforth continued round and round through a number of scenes, several of which it would require repeated visits, and a minute comparison with the history of the times, to interpret. One, however, the large fresco on the lower part of the entrance wall, though somewhat out of its place, depicts the well known

sea-fight between the Venetians and the Imperialists in the port of Ancona in 1174,—a perfect mass of confusion, but full of curious detail, it appears at first sight the work of a different hand; but Spinello, as is proved by a clause in the original contract, was engaged to paint it strictly according to a design previously submitted to him.*—Opposite to this, at the extremity of the room, is represented in a compartment of corresponding magnitude the famous Triumphal Entry of Alexander III. into Venice, after his reconciliation with, or rather victory over Barbarossa. The Pope rides first, the Emperor walks beside him, holding his bridle, two Cardinals and a long train follow behind the Pope, his gallies are seen in the distance, and a number of the citizens meet and welcome them,—it is a noble cavalcade, and reminds one of that of Orcagna in his Triumph of Death in the Campo Santo, the Lombard love for horses descending like an heir-loom through the whole line of Ghibelline or Semi-Byzantine art.

These frescoes are full of spirit and fire; the incidents (so far as I have been able to make them out) are judiciously selected; the composition is excellent—few figures, but well chosen, the characters of pope, emperor, cardinal and soldier admirably discriminated. Painted at a period when the echoes of the recent conflict were yet lingering among the Alps, when Pope and Cæsar were still the representatives respectively of the Classic and Teutonic, the Imaginative and Reasoning, the Ecclesiastical and the Civil

* See the commission, referred to in the preceding note.

elements of Europe, there is a truth and reality, a vivid nowness (as it were) in the successive delineations, in which later works of a similar nature are deficient.—And lastly, while it is impossible not to admire the skilful distribution of the subjects as a whole, it is not a little curious to observe here, as at S. Miniato previously, Spinello's unscrupulous disregard for date and precedency when a deviation is expedient to secure the best situations for his favourite subjects. The personal humiliation which is said to have preceded the Emperor's reconciliation with Pope Alexander is thus represented immediately to the right of the large fresco just described,—occupying consequently the last compartment in the series, instead of its correcter position, the penultimate.—In this fresco Barbarossa is seen lying on his back before the Pope, seated among his Cardinals. The Pope does not, however, place his foot on his neck.

The fact that Alexander III. was a native of Siena accounts probably for the choice of his life as the subject of the series, as well as for the support accorded him by the Sienese, at variance with their Ghibelline principles, throughout the contest.*

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* I subjoin a list of these frescoes, prefixing an asterisk to those of which the interpretation appears to me tolerably clear.

Wall opposite the first window.

* *Lunette*:—Coronation of a Pope by two Cardinals,—that of Adrian IV. in 1154?

* *Compartment below*:—The Investiture of Barbarossa, 1155.

Entrance-Wall.

* *First lunette*:—The Quarrel between Barbarossa and Adrian, 1157.

After completing this last and most important work, Spinello, then probably in his ninety-second

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* *Second lunette*:—The Capture of the Arca Romana at the first siege of Milan, 1158.

* *Compartment below*:—The Sea-fight between the Venetians and Imperialists, in the port of Ancona, 1174. Chronologically misplaced.

Over the First Window.

Lunette:—The Emperor seated below the throne of a Pope, and receiving a letter from a messenger—the Pope holds up his hands in astonishment.

On the Arch—fronting the door.

First Lunette:—Coronation of a Pope by two Cardinals—that of Alexander III. in 1159?—The tiara however is different from that represented in the first compartment of the series, as if this were an Anti-pope.

Second Lunette:—A person in bed, an ecclesiastic apparently and perhaps dying, to the left; to the right, a number of pilgrims before a monk, seated reading,—one of them kisses the hem of his garment.

On the Arch—opposite side.

First Lunette:—Cardinals and laymen sitting and standing around a Pope who discourses to them. Perhaps the Council of Pavia, held under the Anti-pope Victor III., the creature of Frederick, and which excommunicated Alexander, — or the counter-assembly under Alexander which excommunicated the Emperor.

Second Lunette:—Three bishops in prison, and one being burnt,—unless the mitre in the latter instance be merely the peculiar cap worn by heretics at the stake. The name of Arnold of Brescia naturally occurs to one, but I do not see how he can be represented here. Three bishops consecrated the Anti-pope Victor, but I am not aware of their having been imprisoned, or of any heretic having been burnt at that time.[a]

Over the Second Window.

* *Lunette*:—The Emperor's Submission,—kneeling before the

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[a] These four lunettes are interpretable in more than one manner, but too loosely to give satisfaction.

or ninety-third year, but as active and indefatigable as ever, returned to Arezzo, and immediately commenced another extensive work, the façade of the great altar in the church of S. Agnolo, or the Archangel Michael: the subject was the defeat of the rebel angels; the composition, embracing heaven and chaos, was divided into three great masses; God the Father sat enthroned on the summit, in the centre Michael engaged in personal conflict with Satan, "that old serpent," the seven-headed dragon of the Apocalypse, while the angel host precipitated his demon proselytes over the ramparts of heaven into the lower world, in

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Pope, uncrowned, and his hands crossed on his breast, 1175 or 1176.

Wall opposite the door.

**First Lunette*:—The Emperor kneeling before the Pope, expostulating apparently, the Pope blessing him, but gesticulating at the same time in reply.—Apparently their reconciliation.

Second Lunette:—Destroyed.

Compartment below:—Triumphal Entry of Alexander III. into Venice, 1177.

Wall opposite the Second Window.

**Lunette*:—The building of a town—to the left, the Pope consecrates a bishop. Apparently the building of Alessandria by the Lombard League, and its erection into a bishopric by Pope Alexander, in 1168. But if so, it is chronologically misplaced.

**Compartment below*:—The Emperor stretched on his back before the Pope, who is seated amongst his Cardinals. Misplaced like the preceding.

These frescoes ought to be engraved, with a commentary; they comprise, as Baron von Rumohr remarks, "the whole ecclesiastical, civil and military life of the age." *Ital. Forschungen*, tom. ii, p. 229.

which, lowest of all, Satan was a second time represented in his new shape, horribly transformed, reclining on a rock, the monarch of the dreary region.* But the work was never completed,—the aged painter's imagination had been too highly excited; the Satan of his waking visited his nightly dreams, fiercely demanding why he had done him such foul wrong in painting him so hideous; Spinello awoke, but speechless with terror; the shaking of his whole frame roused his wife, who did her utmost to reassure him, but it was all in vain, he slept no more; the ghastly phantom had mastered his fancy, his eyes were fixed from thenceforth in a round, dilated spectral stare, and he died of the fright shortly afterwards.

When last at Arezzo, I made anxious search after this memorable fresco. The church has long since been desecrated, but part of it, including the altar-wall, still exists, partitioned and commuted into a contadina's cottage, and known by the name of 'Casa de' Diavoli.' Some remnants of the fresco are just traceable on the wall of the good woman's bed-room, and in the dark passage beneath it; in the former several of the angels, with their fiery swords striking down the devils, are full of spirit and even grace, and Luca Signorelli has evidently remembered them while painting at Orvieto; in the passage, the head of Lucifer is barely discernible. Perishing and almost undistinguishable as they are, these last efforts of Spinello's pencil struck me alike with wonder at the ease

* This fresco has been engraved by Lasinio.

and freedom of his touch, and with regret that a monument so interesting should have been consigned to utter neglect and decay.

Spinello's memory is still honoured at Arezzo, where he was much lamented, as a man of noble and energetic character, in practical as well as imaginative life. His self-devotedness as one of the fraternity of the Misericordia in attending the sick during the plague of 1383, is mentioned by Vasari, but incidentally only,—such heroism was too common for specific praise. He died probably in 1409 or 1410, and was succeeded by his most distinguished disciple, Lorenzo di Bicci, in the representation of the school of Giacomo da Casentino.

Lorenzo was born at Florence, probably about the middle of the century. His history is obscure in many respects, but there is little reason to doubt his having been pupil of Spinello, while he figures as a painter in legal documents as early as 1375.* He found a kind patron in Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, the ancestor of that illustrious house; but the frescoes he painted in the original palace of the Medici have perished along with it. His only remaining works are the full-length figures of Saints painted by him in the chapels of the Duomo, and the two frescoes to the right and left of the door of the church of S. Egidio, belonging to the hospital of S. Maria Nuova, founded by Folco

* *Baldinucci*, tom. ii, p. 200, edit. *Manni*.

Portinari, the father of Dante's Beatrice; they represent the consecration of the church by Martin V. in 1420, and are pleasing in composition and colouring, but otherwise common-place and weak. Lorenzo lived many years afterwards, but I am ignorant of the precise date of his death. Few painters of his time enjoyed a higher reputation, or less deserved it; without entering into their spirit, he knew how to profit by the external improvements of Masolino and Masaccio, and to adapt them to his own Giottesque style; and thus—without originality, without earnestness, without depth either of thought or feeling—a ready invention, correct but tame design, and pleasing, plausible colouring, rendered him the Luca Giordano of his day—a comparison which his extreme rapidity of execution would of itself justify; "Io fo un Santo e vengo," was his reply to a companion who summoned him to dinner, and the phrase became proverbial. And all this while Cennino starved.—It would be unjust not to add that the comparison with Giordano holds good in courtesy and moral worth, as in other respects.

Lorenzo was the last ostensible representative of this secondary branch of Taddeo Gaddi's school in Tuscany. His son Neri, a painter of no great merit, and who survived till late in the fifteenth century, could no longer be considered a Giottesco, and his pupil, Marco da Montepulciano, who painted after his designs the life of S. Benedict in the cloister of the monastery of Mount Olivet at Arezzo, is unworthy of the very name; his frescoes are contemp-

tible,—utterly devoid of dignity or grace; execrable is the only fitting epithet for them.

But the Giottesque succession was, as usual, propagated in corners long after the two main branches had expired in Tuscany; as late even as the close of the fifteenth century, a Florentine priest imitated the style of the fourteenth—Petrus Franciscus, author of an altarpiece in the church of S. Augustine at S. Gimignano.*

SECTION 4.—*School of Taddeo Gaddi in Lombardy.*

WE have not even yet, however, exhausted the merits of the Giotteschi. It was reserved for the artists of Lombardy to embody that ideal of Christian chivalry which the republican atmosphere of Tuscany could inspire neither to poet nor painter—to carry composition to the highest excellence it attained prior to the commencement of the fifteenth century, and to take the first step made by the school of Giotto towards the correct delineation of landscape, an improvement, indeed, in which, as we shall hereafter see, they had been anticipated by the Sienese and Semi-Byzantine or Ghibelline succession, so closely akin to that of Germany and the North. We have still to deal with the succession of Taddeo Gaddi, probably through the intervention of his favourite pupil, Giovanni da Milano.

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* Immediately to the left on entering. It is dated 1494.

I noticed in a preceding letter the ancient, original Roman school still surviving in the North of Italy in the fourteenth century, and of which numerous frescoes, feeble in design and pale and whitish in colouring, still exist in the choir of S. Zenone at Verona. Of this school Guariento (as also there mentioned) appears to have become chief about the middle of the century—a man of singular genius and originality, but of whose personal history little or nothing is ascertained, not even the place of his birth—he is usually styled 'Padovano,' or of Padua, but as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century, it was doubted whether he belonged to that city or to Verona. Like Cavallini, he had formed a decided style of his own long before undergoing the influence of Giotto. He worked over all Lombardy. At Venice, in 1365, he painted the Paradise in the Sala del Gran Consiglio, a vast fresco, still existing, but concealed by the enormous oil-painting of Tintoretto, representing the same subject.* The War of Spoleto in the same hall, so rapturously described by the Paduan writer, Savonarola,† that one thinks with ten-fold regret of the fire of 1576, which de-

* The Coronation of the Virgin by Our Saviour appears to have been the central group. Over one of the doors of the hall he painted the story of S. Paul, the proto-hermit, and S. Antony breaking the loaf, in order to symbolise the union and brotherly kindness of the citizens of Venice. See Ridolfi's 'Maraviglie dell' Arte, ovvero le Vite degl' Illustri Pittori Veneti e dello Stato,' *Venez.* 2 tom. 8vo, 1648.

† See his 'Commentariolus de laudibus Patavii,' in Muratori's 'Rerum Ital. Scriptores,' tom. xxiv, col. 1169.

stroyed it, along with so many other noble works, was also by his hand. At Padua he executed frescoes innumerable, none of which survive except the small compositions painted in *chiaro-scuro* in the choir of the Eremitani, beneath some frescoes from the history of S. James and S. Philip, which have been totally destroyed by retouching; the small ones, on the contrary, having till lately been at once concealed and protected by a line of wooden stalls, are in perfect preservation.

They represent the Seven Planets, as the system was then reckoned—Luna, Mercury, Venus, Terra, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, together with five subjects from the Passion and Resurrection of Our Saviour, intervening between Terra and Mars. The Deity or genius of each planet is attended by allegorical figures to the right and left, and distinguished by his peculiar signs of the zodiac.* An allegory of human life appears to run through the series, Luna, with her accessary figures, betokening infancy—Mercury, the period of education, male and female—Venus, her peculiar spring of love—Terra, the supremacy of the Pope on earth, as ruler of the Church—Mars, the passions of man which check her beneficent influence—Jupiter the autumn of life, devoted to reflection and devotion—and Saturn, the contemplative stillness of old age. The figures are full of spirit and

* They are minutely explained by the Cav. Giuseppe Bossi, in a long and ingenious letter printed in the Appendix to the 'Lettere Pittoriche' of Bottari, as edited by Ticozzi, Milan, duod. 1825, tom. viii, p. 441.

fancy, and some of them even elegant, although they want the precision of design and ease of the Giotteschi.*

I know no other works of Guariento except a Crucifix, and an Annunciation or Conception of the Virgin, at Bassano. The latter, a fresco, outside of the Municipalità, an old Dominican convent, has been much repainted, but is noticeable for its singularity of composition, God the Father appearing in the sky, within a circle symbolical of heaven, and holding the Dove in his hands, while Our Saviour descends from them, in the shape of an infant and on a ray of light, towards the Virgin. This modification of the ancient composition, and which frequently occurs in Italian paintings of the fifteenth century, is evidently a resuscitation of the old Valentinian or Gnostic doctrine, which maintained that Our Saviour passed through the Virgin like water through a pipe, partaking in no respect of her substance, but bringing his body—or that which appeared to be such, a mere phantom or apparition—with him from heaven. The Crucifix, a painting in tempera, on wood, now preserved in the little Museum at Bassano, is very Giottesque; the arms of Our Saviour are much emaciated, but there is peculiar softness in the flesh and transparency in the drapery; a devotee kneels at the foot, in small. It is signed with the painter's name, 'Garientus pinxit.'†

* One of them, the Mars, has been engraved by Rosini, *Storia, &c.*, tom. ii, p. 211.

† Turoni, a contemporary of Guariento, and of whom some

Guariento was certainly dead in 1378, in which year Giusto Menabuoi, a native of Florence, but surnamed Padovano, from the citizenship having been bestowed upon him by his patron, the celebrated Francesco da Carrara, had succeeded to his supremacy among the artists of Lombardy.

It is by no means clear who his master was,—he certainly inherited from Guariento a taste for rich architectural back-grounds, but his style is thoroughly Giottesque, his colouring is rich and glowing, and it is impossible not to think of Giovanni da Milano as the most likely person to have instructed him, more especially as there occur certain very marked coincidences between his frescoes in the Baptistery at Padua, presently to be mentioned, and those of Giovanni at Assisi.—But we are entering on very dubious ground, a swamp of uncertainty, with critics couching like alligators on either side of a path which it is by no means easy to distinguish,—it behoves us therefore to walk warily—to take good heed to our steps.

There are four great works of the Giotteschi at Padua—the frescoes of the Baptistery, close to the Cathedral, and those of three chapels—that, namely, of S. Philip and S. James, that of S. Felice, and that of S. George—the two former belonging to the

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remarkable pictures are preserved at Verona, appears to have sprung likewise from the original Roman succession,—as well as Pisanello, whose works are shown there, and who seems to have been also influenced by the style of the painter Giusto, presently to be mentioned. This Pisanello, I suspect, must be distinguished from a later and more celebrated artist of that name.

church of S. Antony, and the latter attached and contiguous to it. All of these series are anterior in date to the close of the fourteenth century,—all, by style and colouring, belong to Taddeo Gaddi's succession,—all show the most marked and minute coincidences, in feeling and execution. So far is clear.—But whom they are by, individually, is difficult to ascertain,—the evidence is copious, but most contradictory and confused. The oldest authority, Savonarola, who wrote in 1440, ascribes the Baptistery to Giusto Padovano, the chapel of S. Felice to Jacopo di Avanzo of Bologna, and that of S. George to Aldichieri of Verona; painters of whom I may observe, that Aldichieri is absolutely unknown, except by foreign information, to the historians of Verona,*—that Jacopo di Avanzo, if identical with the Jacobus hereafter to be mentioned under the school of Bologna, must have completely abandoned his national manner, while a writer of the sixteenth century expresses an uncertainty whether he was a native of Bologna, Padua, or Verona,—

* Maffei confesses that no record whatever of Aldigieri (as the name is sometimes written) exists at Verona, and that his name is only known to him through the 'Italia Illustrata' of Flavio Biondo,—a writer born at Forli in 1388, and who died in 1463. *Verona Illustrata*, part iii, col. 152, edit. 1732.—Moschini indeed mentions an 'Aldighieri del q. [quondam] Domenico da Verona,' as occurring in the records of Padua under 1382; but he classes him with the "pittori de' quali non si conoscono lavori." *Dell' Origine e delle Vicende della Pittura in Padova*, 8vo, 1826, p. 9.—This is probably the artist referred to by Savonarola, &c. He may have been a native of Padua, although of Veronese parentage.

that Giusto alone stands distinct and recognised by all parties as the great painter of the day,—that the frescoes of the chapel of S. Philip and S. James, unnoticed by Savonarola, being unanimously ascribed to him by all other authorities, and these frescoes being evidently by the same hand as those of the Baptistery, we may conclude Savonarola correct in ascribing the latter to Giusto,—and that it is difficult not to push the argument still further; my own impression at least, after repeated examinations, was, that if not entirely by one hand, one mind at least reigned paramount throughout the four series, and that from the uncertainty as to Jacopo and Aldichieri, and the credit due to Giusto as the painter of the Baptistery, it would be safest to attribute that mind to him alone—in short, to give him the credit of the whole.*—But this is a question which no mere

* The early authorities respecting these frescoes are, 1. Savonarola, the eulogist of Padua cited above, and who wrote in 1440; 2. Girolamo Campagnuola, nearly his contemporary, a painter, pupil of Squarcione, and who, in a Latin letter to Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, now lost, gave notices of several old painters employed by the Carraras; 3. Andrea Riccio, the architect and sculptor, who flourished at the commencement of the sixteenth century; 4. The anonymous author of the 'Notizie d' Opere di Disegno' existing in Lombardy c. 1537, edited by Morelli, *Bassano*, 8vo, 1800, and who constantly quotes Riccio and Campagnuola,—and 5. Vasari, who also refers to Campagnuola.

Savonarola's words (which are evidently entitled to much deference) are as follows:—"Pictores...duos famosos Civitas nostra habuit, *Guarientum* scilicet, et *Justum*. Quorum fama adhuc ex mirandis gloriosisque picturis præclarissima est. *Guarientus* autem...Dominii Veneti Prætorium, quod Sala Major nominatur,..depinxit, &c...Pinxit autem *Justus* locum amplis-

amateur can decide; the uncertainty of authorship cannot diminish the interest of works of art, and

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simum quem Patavi Baptisterium vocant...Novum et Vetus Testamentum maximo etiam cum ornatu figuratur. Et animo concepi his pictoribus [domesticis] eos addere [externos] illustres et famosos, quorum gloriosa fama ex his, quæ in Urbe nostrâ reliquerunt, magna sui ex parte floruit. Et primum in sede locabo *Zotum* Florentinum, [Giotto,] &c...Secundam sedem *Jacobo Avantii Bononiensi* dabimus, qui magnificorum Marchionum de Lupis admirandam Cappellam veluti viventibus figuris ornavit. Tertiam verò *Altichierio Veronensi*, qui Templiculum Georgii Sancti Nobilium de Lupis, templo Antonii propinquum, maximo cum artificio decoravit. Postremo *Stephano Ferrariensi*," &c. *Commentariolus, &c., ap. Muratori*, tom. xxiv, col. 1169-70.

The 'Anonimo,' edited by Morelli, says of the chapel of S. Felice, (originally of S. James the Greater,)—" Fu dipinta da Jacomo Davanzo Padoano, ovver Veronese, ovver, come dicono alcuni, Bolognese, e da Altichiero Veronese; e fu nel 1376, come appar ivi in un sasso; e par tutta d' una mano; è molto eccellente. Anzi la parte a man manca intrando par d' un' altra mano, è men buona.[a] Fu dedicata da M. Bonifacio di Lupi da Parma, Cavalier e Marchese de Serana, el qual è sepolto ivi, e morse nel 1388." *Notizie*, &c., p. 5:—Of the chapel of S. Giorgio,—" Fu dipinta da Jacomo Davanzo Padoano, e da Altichiero Veronese, come scrive el Campagnuola. El Rizzo [Riccio] vole che solo Altichiero vi dipingesse...Fu fatta far da M. Raimondo di Lupi da Parma, Marchese de Sorana e Cavalier, l'anno 1377." *Ibid.* p. 6:—Of the chapel of S. Luca,—" La dipinse Giusto de nazione Fiorentino, come scrive el Campagnuola; ma Andrea Rizzo [Riccio] lo fa Padoano. E dicono che questo istesso dipinse el Battisterio in Padoa. E nondimeno ivi si legge sopra la porta, che va nell' inclaustro, 'Opus Joannis et Antonii de Padua.' Talchè essendo in vero una istessa maniera, più veramente si potrà dire che questa cappella sii de mano delli detti Giovanni e Antonio Padoani. L' anno 1382, come appar ivi in un sasso, fu dedicata a S. Jacomo e S. Felippo...da M.

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[a] This sentence appears to have been originally a marginal note or gloss by some one who differed from the writer, and to have been erroneously copied into the text.

assuming no more therefore than that the frescoes in the chapels of S. Felice and S. George are, like

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Renier M. Conte e M. Manfredin de' Conti Padoani oriundi da Zenoa." *Ibid.* p. 6:—Of the Baptistery,—"Fu dipinta segondo el Campagnuola e el Rizzo, da Giusto; altri la attribuiscono ad Altichiero. Le pitture di dentro sono molto diverse da quelle di fuori. Ma dentro, sopra la porta che va nell' inclaustro, se legge, 'Opus Joannis et Antonii de Padua.' E di sopra v' erano quattro versi ora spegazzati: credo contenevano memoria delli Signori de Carrara, che aveano fatto far quella opera. Però li Signori Veneziani fecero levar la memoria de quelli Signori quanto più poteano." *Ibid.* p. 19.

While, according to Vasari, Jacopo Avanzi, "pittore Bolognese," together with "Aldigieri da Zevio," and "Sebeto da Verona," "dipinse in Padova la cappella di S. Giorgio...secondo che per lo testamento era stato lasciato dai Marchesi di Carrara. La parte di sopra dipinse Jacopo Avanzi, di sotto Aldigeri alcune storie di S. Luca ed un Cenacolo, e Sebeto vi dipinse storie di S. Giovanni."—On which it may be observed, that Sebeto is a corruption, apparently, of Zevio; that he and Aldigieri are one and the same person,—and that no Cenacolo or life of S. John are to be seen in the chapel in question; he probably means the life of S. George.[a]—Giusto, according to the same authority, "fece nella cappella di S. Giovanni Battista non solo alcune storie del Vecchio e Nuovo Testamento, ma ancora le rivelazioni dell' Apocalisse di S. Giovanni Evangelista; e nella parte di sopra fece in un paradiso, con belle considerazioni, molti cori d' angeli, ed altri ornamenti."—To which he subjoins,—"Nella chiesa di S. Antonio lavorò a fresco la cappella di S. Luca." See the *Vita di Vittore Scarpaccia*, or Carpaccio.—Vasari says nothing of Giovanni and Antonio of Padua.

To which may be added, that, as regards the Baptistery, it appears from an inscription discovered some years ago, that the

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[a] The names Giorgio and Giovanni (especially if abbreviated) might easily be mistaken for each other in ancient writing. The misreading by authors of manuscript information, and the misprinting by typographers of authors' *copy* or manuscript, is a fruitful source of error in ancient works like that of Vasari.

those of Giusto, purely Giottesque and by the school of Taddeo Gaddi; I shall content myself with pointing out a few of the most remarkable compositions in each series, beginning with those of earliest execution, those namely attributed to Giusto, in the Baptistery.

This Baptistery is a quadrangular building, surmounted as usual by a cupola,—characteristic without and beautiful within, where the eye roves delighted over a perfect garden of frescoes, the whole building,

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brother and son of Giusto were buried in it, (*Moschini, Della Origine* &c., p. 10,)—an argument in favour of his having worked there,—that Moschini thinks that Giovanni and Antonio painted the outside, Giusto the interior (*Ibid.* p. 11,) a supposition which appears to overlook the testimony of the Anonimo as to the position of the inscription commemorative of Giovanni and Antonio,—that Rosini suggests that the inscription mentioning Giovanni and Antonio regarded only that side of the interior where it was fixed, *i. e.* the wall opposite the entrance, (*Storia*, &c., tom. ii, p. 218,)—to which it may be answered that the style is too uniform throughout for such an explanation, that the frescoes of the chapel of S. Felice were popularly ascribed to Giusto, prior to the publication of the Anonimo, (*Moschini, Guida par Padova*, p. 12,) although Rossetti indeed had previously ascribed them to Jacopo, on the authority of Savonarola, in his 'Descrizione delle Pitture, &c. di Padova,' 1780,—and that Rosini thinks (from the recollection of the paintings, presumed his, in the Madonna di Mezzaratta at Bologna) that Jacopo di Avanzo did not paint in S. Giorgio.

I shall not attempt to harmonise these authorities, a distinguished German critic, Dr. Ernst Förster, being engaged on a work on the subject of Jacopo di Avanzo, which will in all probability settle the question. I will only repeat my remark, that certain minute and singular coincidences are common to the four series, arguing at least close connexion and intercourse between their respective authors.

cupola, walls and chancel, having been completely covered with them by the munificence of Fina Buzzacarina, wife of Francesco da Carrara, and who died in 1378. They are full of originality, perceptible even in the traditional compositions, which are adhered to in outline, wherever they occur; and Giusto has evidently kept his eye continually fixed on the works of Giotto in the chapel of the Arena, and on those of the Greek mosaicists at Venice.

The Gloria on the cupola is the first instance, I believe, of the style of composition subsequently adopted by Correggio and later painters, but originally, as in the present instance, imitated from the mosaics. Our Saviour, blessing with his right hand and holding the open book, inscribed "Ego sum A et Ω," &c., in his left, stands in the centre, within a circle of light, and below him, in a vesica piscis, the Virgin, erect, with her hands raised in prayer, as at S. Mark's and in the Duomo of Murano. To their right and left sit, in different attitudes, and with their distinctive emblems, the Saints of God, male and female, five rows deep, in a vast circle; the effect is singularly brilliant, and reminds one of Dante's comparison of the church in heaven to a snow-white rose. The lower circuit of the cupola is filled with the history of the book of Genesis, which ends abruptly with the Concealment of Joseph in the well, Giusto (like the mosaicists in the porch of S. Mark's) having miscalculated his space. Some of the subjects are disposed in regular compartments, but the greater number follow each other uninter-

ruptedly, and are distributed in front and in the background alternately, without distinct partition. The series begins, immediately opposite the door and beneath the Virgin, with the Creation of the Earth—a round ball surrounded with the signs of the zodiac—by the Almighty, seated on the golden sphere. Among the subjects that follow, you will observe the Death of Cain in the thicket; the Angel at the gate of Paradise giving Seth the branch of the Tree of Life, and Seth planting it (apparently) on his father's breast; Nimrod, of gigantic stature, directing the building of the Tower of Babel, an immense pile, rising in degrees like a pyramid, and the Destruction of Sodom, in which a large bird's-eye view is given of the city, as in other of these different Giottesque series at Padua.

Dropping your eye, the History of John the Baptist is represented on the southern wall, and that of the Virgin and Our Saviour on the western and northern, and on the Triumphal Arch. I may cite, among these, the Annunciation as very beautiful,—conscious of a tendency to make the female form clumsy, Giusto usually arrays his Virgins in a long, falling, blue robe, which gives them much grace and majesty; the Massacre of the Innocents; the Marriage at Cana in Galilee—in which the obsequious gestures of the attendants receiving Our Saviour's orders are probably the reflection of the manners of the time in Lombardy; the Resurrection of Lazarus —modified from Giotto's in the Arena; the Betrayal —in which the background of the composition is

filled with soldiers and Pharisees, their features respectively harsh and austere,—here and there, sad to behold! a gloried head—even S. John's, but he looks sorrowfully back—is seen making its way through the crowd, in accordance with the testimony of truth, "they all forsook him and fled;" the Procession to Calvary—Simon carrying the cross, although Our Saviour rests his hand on it, to express his willingness to bear it,—and the Crucifixion—the Byzantine composition, in its fullest extent, with the addition of the emblematical pelican immediately above Our Saviour.

The cupoletta of the chancel represents the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the traditional composition, as depicted in mosaic at S. Mark's; and the walls of this little recess are completely lined with about forty small subjects, entirely taken from the Apocalypse, and treated with the most fearless originality; one of them is delightfully quaint and *naive*—the four angels kneeling on the four corners of the earth, and forcibly compressing with both hands the mouths of the four winds, represented as Æolus' heads; in spite, however, of their utmost efforts, they cannot prevent great blasts escaping, and you almost hear the spluttering and fizzing that is going on. Other of these compositions are very grand, and the painter has combined, added, and taken away with singular felicity. The lunette above the altar represents God the Father within a vesica piscis, the lamb lying in his bosom, the four beasts keeping watch around the throne, the lamp burning in front, the twenty-four

elders, to the right and left, offering their crowns, and angels in front adoring. The four horsemen are represented in the four *pennacchi* or pendentives of the cupola,—the Vision is then continued round the walls and under the arches, the subjects being most skilfully adapted to the different spaces that were to be covered; the seven trumpets, for instance, are carried from the suffit of the small transverse arch to the left hand on entering the chancel, all round it, to the suffit of the corresponding transverse arch to the right hand,—similarly, and with exquisite propriety, the seven last vials are disposed on the suffit of the triumphal arch of entrance, symbolical of death. It is the most complete and comprehensive illustration of the Apocalypse ever attempted in painting, and, rude as it undoubtedly is in detail, there are hints here by which a painter desirous of taking a lofty flight might profit much.

The altar-piece, on looking closely into it, appears to be by the same painter as the frescoes, and is well worth examination.*

* I need not enumerate the historical frescoes, which are easy of comprehension, but the compositions from the Apocalypse in the Chancel are more obscure, and though much injured, merit close examination. They may be divided into five series, the First comprising the Vision from its commencement to the opening of the fifth and sixth seals, and the binding of the winds; the Second, the seven trumpets; the Third, from the persecution of the woman by the dragon, to the commission of the angel to reap the earth, inclusive; the Fourth, the seven last vials, and the Fifth, from the Judgment of Babylon, to the conclusion. I have already mentioned in the text the Descent of the Holy Ghost, so appropriately depicted on the cupola.

Series I.

Fewer words will suffice for the chapel of S. Philip and S. James the Less, in the church of S. Antonio,

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Series I.

1. *Lunette on the left wall*:—The Vision of S. John, in Patmos, of Our Saviour among the seven golden candlesticks. *Rev.* i, 10, sqq.

2. *Lunette above the altar*:—The Vision of God the Father, the Lamb, "as it had been slain," lying in his bosom, the four beasts, the elders offering their crowns, &c. *Rev.* iv, 1, sqq.

3. *First pennacco, to the left*:—The opening of the First Seal. *Rev.* vi, 2.

4. *Second pennacco, to the left*:—The Opening of the Second Seal. *Rev.* vi, 4.

5. *Third pennacco, to the right, next the altar*:—The opening of the Third Seal. *Rev.* vi, 5.

6. *Fourth pennacco, to the right*:—The Opening of the Fourth Seal. *Rev.* vi, 8.

7, 8, 9. *Lunette on the right wall of the chancel*, divided into three compartments, the first representing the Opening of the Fifth Seal, *Rev.* vi, 9; the second, the Opening of the Sixth Seal, the great Earthquake, the Sun turned into darkness and the Moon into blood, &c. *Rev.* vi. 12; the third, the Angel ascending from the East, and commanding the four angels to bind the four winds of the earth, *Rev.* vii, 1.

Series II.

10. *On the suffit of the small transverse arch to the left on entering the chancel*:—To the left, the First Angel sounding his trumpet; to the right, the hail and fire, mingled with blood, descending on the earth. *Rev.* viii, 7, 8.

11. *First upper compartment, in the same line, on the left wall of the chancel*:—the Second Angel sounding; the burning mountain cast into the sea, when the "third part of the ships were destroyed." *Rev.* viii, 9.

12. *Second upper compartment, &c.*—The Third Angel sounding; the star falling from heaven on the fountains and rivers of waters. *Rev.* viii, 10.

13. *Altar-wall, upper row, to the left of the altar*:—the Fourth Angel sounding, the sun and moon smitten. *Rev.* viii, 12.

14. *Altar-wall, &c., to the right of the altar*:—Fifth Angel

emphatically the 'Santo,' of Padua. The best of the series are the S. James thrown down from his

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sounding, a star fallen from heaven, its nether end a key, which has unlocked the pit and let out the locusts, *Rev.* ix, 1.

15. *Inner jamb or side-wall of the window, in the same line, right wall of the chancel*:—Apollyon (apparently) the King of the Locusts, on horseback, *Rev.* ix, 11.

16 and 17. *Suffit of the window arch, to the left*:—The Sixth Angel sounding, *Rev.* ix, 3; *Ditto to the right*, the four angels bound in the river Euphrates, *Rev.* ix, 14.

18. *Right wall of the chancel, in the same line*:—The Angel, standing on the sea and land, and swearing that there shall be time no longer,—and the other angel giving John the book to eat, *Rev.* x, 5–10.

19. *Suffit of the small transverse arch to the right on entering the chancel*:—To the right, the Temple or City of God, on the side of the heavenly Mount Zion, the two Witnesses ascending to heaven, the Hail-storm and the great Earthquake, *Rev.* xi, 11–13; *to the left*, the shower of hail and snow, *Rev.* xi, 15.

Series III.

20. *First compartment, middle row, left wall of the chancel*:—The seven-headed Dragon attacking the woman with her child, *Rev.* xii, 1.

21. *Second ditto*:—War in heaven, the great Dragon cast out, &c. *Rev.* xii, 7.

22. *Middle row, altar-wall, to the left of the altar*:—The seven-headed Beast, rising out of the sea, *Rev.* xiii, 1.

23. *Middle row, altar-wall, to the right of the altar*:—The Faithful within the City of God; the Lamb, with a glory, elevated on an altar, as in the mosaics, *Rev.* xiv, 1.

24. *Same line, inner side-wall of the window, to the left*:—A goat rampant, emblematical of lubricity; below, a hermit on his knees, *Rev.* xiv, 4.

25. *Ditto, to the right*:—The three Angels flying in the midst of heaven, *Rev.* xiv, 6, 7, 8.

26. *Right-hand wall, middle row, same line*:—Our Saviour holding the sickle, calm and majestic, *Rev.* xiv, 14, 15.

27. *Same line, on the inner face of the smaller transverse arch to the right on entering the chancel*:—An angel floating

pulpit in the piazza of Jerusalem, an excellent composition; and, on the opposite (the left-hand) wall,

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down from heaven and presenting a sickle to another angel who rises from behind an altar to receive it, *Rev.* xiv, 18.

Series IV.

28. *Suffit of the triumphal arch of entrance, beginning from the right as you face the altar:—in the centre*, a Seraph holding the seven last vials of the wrath of God.

29. *Ditto, to the right*:—Several angels in a row, singing, *Rev.* xvi, 5–7.

30. *Ditto, to the left*:—The First Vial poured out on the Earth, *Rev.* xvi, 2.

31. *Below No.* 30:—the Second Vial, on the Sea, *Rev.* xvi, 3.

32. *Below No.* 31:—the Third Vial, on the rivers and fountains of waters, *Rev.* xvi, 4.

33. *Lowest to the left*:—the Fourth Vial, on the Sun, *Rev.* xvi, 8.

34. *Immediately below No.* 29, *to the right*:—the Fifth Vial, on the seat of the Beast, represented as a Gothic chair, *Rev.* xvi, 10.

35. *Below the preceding*:—the Sixth Vial, on the Euphrates, *Rev.* xvi, 12.

36. *Lowest, to the right*:—the Seventh Vial poured out in the air, below it "the great city" divided into three parts, &c. *Rev.* xvi, 19.

Series V.

37. *First compartment, lower row, left wall of the chancel*:—the great Whore riding on the seven-headed monster, *Rev.* xvii, 3.

38. *Second compartment*:—the Whore lying drunken on the earth, *Rev.* xviii, 1.

39. *Lower row, altar-wall, to the left of the altar*:—The Beast lying on its back, dead; behind it, a great mill-stone cast down from heaven into the sea by an angel,—a goat butting against it, *Rev.* xviii, 21.

40. *Ditto, to the right of the altar*:—Our Saviour on a white horse, followed by his company, *Rev.* xix, 11.

41. *Same line, inner side-wall of the window, to the left*:—

a miracle of S. Philip in Scythia, where he preached for twenty years after the dispersion of the Apostles. They brought him before the statue of Mars, and commanded him to offer sacrifice; a dragon suddenly rushed down from under the base of the altar, and slew the son of the High Priest and the two tribunes who presided, and infected several of the bystanders with its poisonous breath; the Apostle commanded them to throw down the idol and plant the cross in its place, promising that the dead should arise and the sick be made whole, and then, turning to the dragon, and bidding it depart into the wilderness without hurting any one, it went forth and was seen no more.—Giusto has rendered the legend with much effect; the temple is a magnificent piece of architecture; the idol rises conspicuous in the centre, on a high altar, and the sudden rush of the dragon

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The Angel standing in the Sun, and calling on the fowls of heaven, *Rev.* xix, 17.

42. *Ditto, to the right*:—The Angel chaining the Dragon, *Rev.* xx, 1.

43. *Same line, lower row, right-hand wall*:—The New Jerusalem, *Rev.* xxi, 10.

44. *Inner face of the small transverse arch, to the right hand on entering the chancel*:—S. John falling down to worship before the feet of the Angel, *Rev.* xxii, 9.

The small compositions on the altar-piece are as follows, 1. Zacharias in the temple; 2. The Visitation, (very sweet;) 3. The Birth of the Baptist; 4. Zacharias naming him John; 5. His circumcision; 6. The Martyrdom of Zacharias; 7. John, still a child, with his mother in the desert, where she is about to leave him; 8. John preaching; 9. John sending his disciples to enquire of Jesus; 10. The Dance of the daughter of Herodias; 11. The Decollation of S. John; 12. His Burial.—This altar-piece ought to be carefully cleaned.

is admirably expressed.—Below this is represented the Crucifixion of S. Philip; the composition reminds one of that in the Menologion,—he is crucified in a long shirt, and the executioners throw stones at him. A great crowd of spectators look on, figures full of dignity, well grouped and relieved; the two centurions on horseback are portraits of Eccelino and Wido, descendants apparently of the celebrated family of Romano, once the tyrants of Padua. The landscape is a shade superior to that of the contemporary Giotteschi in Tuscany. But these frescoes, as indeed those of the Baptistery likewise, have been very much retouched.*

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* The historical frescoes in this chapel are as follows:—

From the Legend of S. James.

Lunette above the left window of the tribune:—The first Council, at Jerusalem.

Lunette above the right window:—Our Saviour appearing to S. James and giving him the Eucharist, the Apostle having vowed not to eat till the Saviour should have risen from the dead.

Large lunette, right wall of the chapel:—S. James thrown down from the pulpit, while preaching to the multitude.

Large lunette, over the entrance wall, above the arch:—His martyrdom.

Right hand wall, nearest to the altar of the lower row:—S. James releasing a merchant unjustly detained captive, by tilting to one side the tower in which he was confined, so that he crept out, as from under a bell, through the aperture thus effected.[a]

Same wall, nearest to the door:—His appearance to a pilgrim

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[a] This story is told also of S. James the Less, but with the variation, that S. James appeared to the merchant, and leading him to the summit of the tower, the tower bent itself down to the level of the ground, so that he stepped off and went his way. See the 'Golden Legend' of James de Voragine.

Those of the chapel, now known as that of S. Felice, represent the history of S. James the Greater, to whom it was originally dedicated by Bonifazio de' Lupi, Marquis of Soragna, the descendant (according to tradition) of the Queen Lupa of the legend, as related among my notices of the Christian Mythology. Several of the compositions have suffered much, but the story is traceable throughout. They are all, I think, by the same hand, although the progress of improvement is evident. The same style of heads, grouping, relief, costume, architecture, and peculiar feeling, prevails here as in Giusto's acknowledged frescoes, and in those I have yet to speak of in the chapel of S. George; but if by him, which I dare not affirm, they must be of prior execution.*

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who had lost his way, supplying him with food and guiding him to his destination.

From the Legend of S. Philip.

In two large compartments, one above the other, on the left-hand wall:—His detection of the dragon, as noticed in the text, and his Crucifixion.

From the Legend of the Beato Luca.

In the two lower compartments, to the right and left of the window of the tribune:—S. Antony's apparition to him, warning him of the machinations of Eccelino da Romano against the liberties of Padua, the town being seen in the background, a curious bird's-eye view,—and Luca obtaining from Our Saviour that those who seek benefits through his intercession shall obtain them.

* The subjects are as follows,—the series beginning on the first lunette on the left-hand wall as you enter the chapel:—

1. Interior and lateral porches of a magnificent building; to the left, Hermogenes, the magician, sends Philetes to dispute with S. James; in the centre, S. James, in his pulpit, converts

A Crucifixion, which fills the three large compartments below the lunettes on the south wall, is very

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him; to the right, Hermogenes, holding his magical book, sends his familiars to arrest the Apostle and Philetes; in the right-hand corner, the devils address them, and complain of Hermogenes.

2. *Altar-wall, first lunette to the left*:—Hermogenes brought to S. James by the devils; Philetes burning the magical books; Hermogenes and Philetes seated conversing with S. James.

3. *Middle lunette*:—S. James healing the paralytic man on his road to execution,—and his Decapitation.

4. *Third lunette*:—Sea-shore in front of the castle of Queen Lupa, the empty boat beside it, an angel holding the rudder; Hermogenes and Philetes lay the body on the stone, which shapes itself into a sarcophagus; Queen Lupa, with her sister, looks down from the balcony of the castle.

5. *Right-hand wall, to the left of the window*:—Hermogenes and Philetes arrested by a soldier of the Spanish king. Much defaced.

6. *Right wall, to the right of the window*:—Nothing discernible but the iron bars denoting their imprisonment.

7. *First of three lunettes on the wall that separates the chapel from the nave*:—Their release from prison; their pursuers drowned,—the horses struggling in the water are excellent. This and the succeeding compartments are certainly, I think, by the same painter as the rest.

8. *Second lunette*:—The sarcophagus drawn by the wild oxen into Queen Lupa's palace. In the background they seem to go down on their knees before Hermogenes and Philetes.

9. *Third lunette*:—Interior of Queen Lupa's palace; she receives baptism.

10. *Left-hand wall, below No.* 1.—Apparition of S. James, in a dream, to Don Ramiro I, King of Leon, and his deliberation thereupon with his Council, which led to

11. The defeat of the Saracens at Clavijo, A.D. 844,[a] S. James appearing above the broken arch in the back-ground.

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[a] When 70,000 infidels fell on the field. "From that time the name of S. Iago became the battle-cry of the Spaniards." — *Prescott's Hist. of Ferd. and Isabella*, tom. i, p. 11.

beautiful; the composition resembles that in the Baptistery, the colouring is very soft and pleasing,—many of the figures are singularly noble and graceful, both in attitude and drapery; I may notice especially an old and young man in the compartment to the right, and one of the Maries, a very sweet creature, tenderly supporting the Virgin.

But the finest works of the Paduan Giotteschi are in the chapel of S. George, said to have been built by another of the De' Lupi family, Messer Raimondo, in 1377.

The frescoes on the entrance-wall are five, representing the Annunciation,—the Nativity, a happy modification of the Byzantine composition,—the Adoration of the Kings, very simple, dignified, and noble,—the Presentation in the Temple, strongly resembling Giovanni da Milano's composition at Assisi,—and the Flight into Egypt, in which, as in the Adoration, and in the frescoes of the chapel of S. Philip and S. James, a large city is represented in the background.

On the altar-wall the Crucifixion is again repeated,—the same general composition as in the chapel of S. Felice and the Baptistery, although neither of the three are exactly alike; in this the soul of the penitent thief has flown up some distance before it perceives the expectant angel,—it stretches out its hand for support and assistance; the group of the Virgin fainting, supported by the Maries, is very affecting,—behind them, clasping their hands in grief, stand S. John and the same lovely woman whom I noticed

in the similar composition in the chapel of S. Felice. Above the Crucifixion is represented the Coronation of the Virgin, seated beside Our Saviour on a rich architectural throne, angels crowding forward to the right and left, of whom the two foremost hold respectively the cup and the wafer, the sacramental gifts of God through the Church, thus typified by the Madonna.

Turning to the right wall of the chapel, the four uppermost frescoes depict the history of S. Catherine: in the first, she refuses to offer sacrifice; in the second, she disputes with the Doctors; in the third, she is saved from the wheel; in the fourth, she receives martyrdom. The outlines of the compositions, Byzantine doubtless in their origin, are nearly the same throughout as in the basreliefs of Masuccio at Naples. These frescoes have been much injured.

Opposite to these, on the left wall, is represented, in two rows of compartments, the history of S. George—the series in which, as I remarked above, the spirit of Christian chivalry finds, for the first and almost for the last time, its voice in the painting of Italy, the compositions of Spinello, and those I shall hereafter have to notice as existing at Siena, admirable as they are in their way, being mere pageants of feudalism in comparison. These, therefore, deserve emphatic praise, and a distinct though rapid enumeration. I have already related the legend in my introductory page[illegible]

Upper Row.

I. The Conquest of the Dragon;—in the space in front of the city of King Zevius, the roofs and windows crowded with spectators.

II. The Baptism of King Zevius, — within the church built on his conversion, here represented of the richest Lombard architecture, a court in front and palaces (apparently) to the right and left. He kneels at the font, holding his crown in his hand, and receives the holy dew from the hand of S. George, who wears the white dress and long, pointed and plated shoes of a gentleman of the fourteenth century. Two ladies with their children look on from an arch to the right, and a third descends into the court from another to the left, the king's daughter probably,—an officer respectfully directs her attention to the ceremony. Accessary figures are scattered, singly or in groups, throughout the composition.

III. This fresco has nothing to do with the history of the Saint; it represents the Virgin and Child seated on a lofty architectural throne, and receiving the homage of the whole family of the Lupi, a noble and chivalrous company, kneeling, escorted by angels, and each respectively presented by his or her patron Saint.

Lower Row.

IV. S. George drinking the poison,—he stands in the court of the palace, a noble figure in a long yellow mantle, erect and calm, the spectators

watching him with astonishment; Dacian, the governor, who had condemned him, looks down from the lower window of the palace, attended by his councillors.

v. S. George stretched on the wheel, and the angels at his prayer destroying it with their swords and releasing him.—Through the windows of the two projecting towers of the palace, to the right and left, are seen the previous interview between the governor and the Saint, and the baptism of the aged Magnentius, after the rescue.

vi. The fall of the temple of Apollo, crushing the priest and worshippers; S. George kneels in front, and Dacian looks on from the palace-window to the left.

vii. S. George's martyrdom, outside the city,—kneeling, the executioner with his sword upraised, awaiting the word of command,—an aged man standing behind the Saint, seems to expostulate with him; soldiers and horsemen fill the background. A composition of very great merit.*

Turning once more to the right-hand wall, we may conclude with the history of S. Lucia, painted in four compartments beneath that of S. Catherine. She was a virgin of Syracuse, betrothed to a brutal husband, who denounced her as a Christian to the Roman Consul, Paschasius,—this is admirably represented in the first compartment; refusing to keep

* The principal group of this composition is engraved in Rosini, tav. 40.

silence, and asserting that the chaste are the temples of the Holy Ghost, the Consul commanded her to be dragged by oxen to the bagnio, as seen in the succeeding composition, but every effort failed to move her from the spot; she was then exposed to a fire of pitch and rosin, but the flames would not harm her, till finally the sword of one of the Consul's satellites was permitted to release her, and she expired after receiving the Eucharist. These latter incidents are represented in the third and fourth compartments; in the former she is seen thrice,—in the flames, praying but unhurt—under a central portico, naked, while the executioners pour boiling oil on her shoulders—and, finally, to the right, receiving the death-blow from the Consul's dagger,—she holds up her hands, shrinking a little back with natural terror, but prepared to die; in the concluding fresco, her body is exposed under the porch of a magnificent church, while the funeral ceremony is performed over her remains, and through a small window, of the second story, to the left, she is seen receiving the *viaticum* from the Bishop.

I cannot express the pleasure these frescoes of S. Giorgio gave me, and which is still so vivid that I would fain caution you against expecting too much from my description. They are singularly dramatic; every variety of character, Governor, Consul, Knight, Noble, Citizen, and Clown, is discriminated with a degree of truth that startles one; they are full of portraits, much more knightly and gentlemanlike than you see in the Florentine frescoes,—the prin-

cipal figures are uniformly characteristic, and the noblest in mien and look as well as the most conspicuous in place; feeling, simplicity, and good taste prevail throughout; the design is upon the whole excellent, save that the female form, as in the naked S. Lucia, is deficient in elegance; the grouping and relief are admirable,—there are crowds of figures, but no confusion; the colouring is soft and pleasing; the backgrounds—occasionally of landscape, resembling that in the chapels previously described—are more usually of the most gorgeous and exquisite Lombard or Pointed architecture,—they would form on that account alone a most beautiful series of engravings. In short, I cannot but think that the author of these frescoes comes very near Masaccio in his peculiar merits, while in Christian feeling, invention, and even in composition, he surpasses him. These are, in fact, the excellences which mark the man; unlike many of the Giotteschi, he has a thousand ideas of his own,—and to justify my praise of his compositions, I need only give you a plain, unvarnished description of one of the best, the second in the series of S. Lucia's history:—

The scene is the piazza in front of the Consul's palace; Paschasius and his chief councillor are seated in a loggia, or window, overlooking it; towards the left, stands S. Lucia, calm and sweet and dignified, her hands joined in prayer, and looking up to heaven, while three yoke of oxen, attached to her by a rope round her waist, are straining and stumbling and falling on their knees and noses in their

efforts to drag her from the spot; one man goads, another lashes them, a third endeavours to drag them forward by his own weak strength; her brutal husband, grasping her robe about the bosom, pulls her with all his force,—other figures behind are pushing her; and, in spite of all this, there she stands as unmoved and still as if communing with God in the midst of a desert—her whole figure and attitude, her utter, effortless, unresistent immobility forming the most marked contrast with the frenzied efforts of the oxen, and the rabid rage of her persecutors,—and yet, somehow or other, the efforts and the rage are expressed to the full to the mind, without being offensively violent to the eye. A little behind, stand a group of Christians, losing all thought of self in their sympathy with her; one is praying, another points to her and looks up to the tyrant as if to say, "See here, how little the powers of darkness avail against the spouse of Christ," while the chief councillor, standing beside him, points to the scene below, and seems to expostulate with him for fighting against God. The whole is in keeping, and still the figure of S. Lucia again and again attracts your eye in its calm loveliness.—I have little hesitation in expressing my belief that none but a painter of the fourteenth century could have painted this fresco, none but a Giottesco, none but this artist of S. Giorgio, whether we name him Giusto, Jacopo di Avanzo, or Aldichieri.

But the tide of feeling was on the turn, and taste, her handmaid, was changing too. He left no suc-

cession worthy of the name. The style was introduced at Verona, where it appears in various frescoes and paintings, one or two perhaps by himself, the remainder by his scholars.* Of these Giacomo da Verona painted, in 1397, the church of S. Michele at Padua, where a few of his frescoes may still be seen, but they display little originality.† Out of this Veronese branch, or more probably, as I have

* As, for instance, in the Annunciation on the triumphal arch at S. Zenone, and the Virgin and child receiving a whole family presented by their patron Saints, (as in the chapel of S. Giorgio,) on the Southern wall of the presbytery, dated MCCCLXXXX.., the vacant space having been originally filled by one or two additional numerals, which have been effaced,—a work of merit, but inferior to Giusto; the Virgin wants his sweetness, the drapery falls in narrower folds, and the architecture, though rich, is less free and elegant. A Crucifix at the Western end of the Northern nave is much superior, the grief deep, but not caricatured—with these may be classed, the Virgin and child receiving a family of knights, above the tomb of a person who died in 1390, in S. Anastasia, and two or three others by the same hand in that church; others too of a similar description are scattered through Verona, and constantly occur under the arches of Gothic tombs of the Pisan type. Some of these are attributed to the Stefano of Verona, to whom certain of the frescoes of Padua are ascribed by Rosini and others, but who, judging by the dates of these, and their inferiority, must have been a mere student of them. He must not be confounded with Stefano da Zevio, a painter of later date, who appears to have belonged to the school of Squarcione. But traces of the Paduan Giotteschi are not exclusively found at Verona. Even Andrino Edresio of Pavia, a descendant of the original Roman school, and whose attitudes and style of composition resemble the Sienese rather than the Giottesque, betrays the influence of Padua in the rich architectural backgrounds of his frescoes.

† Rosini thinks he may have been the master of Squarcione, born in 1394. There is certainly no resemblance between them in style.

surmised, out of the elder pale-colouring Roman school which it had superseded, arose the celebrated Squarcione, who, smitten by the love of the antique, and settling at Padua, became the father of the great classic school of Melozzo and Mantegna, which supplanted that of Giotto throughout Lombardy nearly at the same moment that the Giotteschi in Tuscany yielded to a similar influence in Masolino, Masaccio, and Uccello. It was a step of declension in both cases, a compromise of higher and more spiritual for lower and more technical excellences, yet necessary and prerequisite in order, in the first place, to secure a thorough mastery over the tools and materials of art, and secondly, to create that spirit of antagonism, out of which only, by the universal law of nature, can spring perfection.

The Giotteschi, however, were in every region peculiarly tenacious of life; they found employment at Padua long after the star of their school had kissed the horizon. Their last works there are the frescoes of the vast hall in the Palazzo della Ragione, painted by Giovanni Miretto, assisted by a painter of Ferrara,* between the years 1423 and 1441,†—three hundred and nineteen in number, representing the signs of the zodiac, the planets, the winds, winged and flying,—the four seasons, with their appropriate exercises and employments,—the constellations and the symbols of human temperament and disposition, as influenced by them,—the Apostles, according to

* *Anon. Morelli*, p. 28.

† *Rosini, Storia, &c.*, tom. ii, p. 214.

the signs of the zodiac under which their festivals fall, &c. &c., all from Hyginus, and a most curious medley, but so much retouched that it is difficult to speak as to their original merit, which does not indeed appear to have been great. The subjects are supposed to correspond to those painted there in the thirteenth century, after the suggestion of the celebrated sage, Pietro d'Abano.*

SECTION 5.—*Giotteschi of Umbria.*

A FEW words on the subject of the Giotteschi of Umbria, and their pride and glory, Gentile da Fabriano—who occupies in Painting nearly the same intermediate rank between the two periods, that Giacomo della Quercia does in Sculpture—will close these lengthened yet imperfect notices.

The influence of Giotto had penetrated that beautiful district early in the fourteenth century. Oderigi of Gubbio is said to have become his pupil, but none

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* The style, although Giottesque, has a mixture, a reminiscence as it were, of that of Guariento.—The Coronation of the Virgin, in the centre of the entrance-wall, is very beautiful and evidently by a different and superior hand, possibly that of Giusto, whose style it strikingly resembles.[a] Perhaps this end of the hall escaped the fire of 1520, after which the remaining designs were repainted.

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[a] Rossetti tells us that "al diligentissimo Signor Francesco Zanoni, che con tanta maestria le suddette pitture risuscitò, cominciando nell' anno 1762, riuscì di scoprirvi sotto il nome di Giotto in questa forma: GI TO; mancandovi il primo O, e l'asta perpendicolare del primo T," &c.—*Descrizione delle Pitture, &c. di Padova, &c.* 1780, p. 289. Can it have been the name of Giusto which was thus discovered—and under the Coronation?

of his paintings are extant. Fabriano, however, was, towards the middle of the century, the seat of a Giottesque school, represented by Allegretto Nuzio, or da Fabriano, who had learnt at Florence; his pictures, though weak, strongly resemble those of Gentile, who is supposed to have been originally his pupil.* In what year the latter was born is uncertain; it is disputed also whether he was master or scholar of the celebrated Florentine, Fra Angelico,—I doubt his having been either one or the other; much sympathy may doubtless be observed between them, but this might exist independently of such immediate intercourse. I suspect, rather, a connexion on Gentile's part with the Giotteschi of Padua and Verona.

He visited Venice about 1418, and painted the sea-fight between the Doge Ziani and Otho, son of the Emperor Frederick, in the Sala del Gran Consiglio, for which he was rewarded by a yearly pension, and the privilege of wearing the robe or toga of a Venetian senator.† On this occasion, having formed an intimate friendship with the painter Giacomo Bellini, he stood god-father to his son Gentile, born in 1421,—the elder brother of Giovanni, the parent of that celebrated Venetian school which superseded the Paduan or Classic succession of Squarcione, and ultimately produced Giorgione and Titian. The rich colouring of the Bellini and

* One of them is engraved by Rosini, tav. 23.

† *Ridolfi, Vite, &c.*, tom. i, p. 23.

their pupils is frequently attributed to this commerce of friendship between their ancestor and Gentile, but I think erroneously. The transalpine artists of Cologne and Flanders were noted for their brilliant colouring in the fourteenth century; many of them resided at Padua and Venice; Lorenzo Veneziano rivalled their rich tints towards the close of the century, and I have little doubt that Gentile adopted them either from him or his Northern competitors, that the Bellini did the like in after years, and that the latter inherited nothing from Gentile except a kindly sympathy towards Umbria, predisposing them to alliance with the followers of Donatello rather than the less spiritual succession of Ghiberti.

Be that, however, as it may, Gentile, without a doubt, stands indebted to the Flemish painters for that positive improvement in landscape, of which we have noticed the first faint dawnings among the Giotteschi in the frescoes of Padua. I would especially refer to his Adoration of the Kings at Florence, painted in 1423, after his return from Venice, a charming picture, the background of which, both in the principal composition and in the Flight into Egypt on the predella, accounts for the excellence of that in the large fresco of Masaccio in the Carmine.* All Gentile's merits and demerits may be observed in this picture,—the elongated Giottesque eye, the vicious prodigality of gold (in imitation

* The background in this picture strongly resembles that of Memling, the Flemish painter, in his 'Seven Joys of Mary,' at Munich.

probably of the Northern masters), and on the other hand, the richness of fancy which peoples his scenes with all that is gay and cheerful in nature, the neighing of horses and baying of dogs, chivalric men and graceful women, contrasted with monkeys and dwarfs, the scoff and sport of the middle ages,—a *tout-ensemble* by which Michael Angelo's well-known criticism, that Gentile had a style similar to his name, is fully justified. This picture is now in the Gallery of the Academy, but the colouring has much faded.*

Gentile appears in this same year, 1423, at Orvieto, with the sonorous appellation of 'Magister Magistrorum.' A Madonna and child, in fresco, is still shewn there as his, but it has been entirely repainted.

In 1425 he was again at Florence, that date having been inscribed on a painting in several compartments, of which the four side-panels, representing the Magdalen, the Baptist, S. Nicholas, and S. George, are still preserved in the church of S. Niccolò.† The expression, especially of the Magdalen, is very sweet and pleasing.

He probably went to Rome the following year, having been sent for by Pope Martin V., who died in 1431, to paint in S. Giovanni Laterano; he died there after nearly finishing three frescoes, which were completed by Pisanello of Verona, who worked in

* It is engraved in a beautiful series of outlines after pictures in the Academy, at present in the course of publication at Florence.

† Behind the altar.

competition with him,*—an artist of whom I shall have more to say hereafter. These frescoes have long since perished, but their influence, if I mistake not, is long afterwards perceptible—in the works of Pisanello himself, of Benozzo Gozzoli, who inherited much of his feeling and manner, and of Pinturicchio. It is a disputed point whether Masaccio worked at Rome contemporarily with him,—I think not, but they had ample opportunities of intercourse at Florence; he certainly resembles him in nothing save his landscape.

All Gentile's frescoes have therefore perished, and it is impossible to duly estimate any ancient artist by his easel paintings. Fortunately, however, his *chef-d'œuvre* in distemper still exists—the large altar-piece which Raphael, in his early youth, is said to have visited Fabriano expressly to admire and study. It is now in the museum of the Brera at Milan, its compartments broken up and barbarously dissevered, but all in excellent preservation. The Coronation of the Virgin occupied the centre, and full-length figures of the Magdalen and S. Jerome, S. Domenic and S. Francis, all walking on flowers, the side panels. The Coronation is pleasing, although rather dusky in colouring, and the heads are weak; but the four Saints are much superior, the Jerome especially, and the Magdalen—a lovely figure, sweet and graceful, pure and virginal,

* *Facius, de Viris illustribus*,—a writer of the fifteenth century.

in her close-fitting purple robe, over which flows loosely a rich mantle of crimson lined with white down; she bends gracefully forwards, holding her emblematic vase.

Gentile left no pupils of note in Umbria or elsewhere, but an obscure succession of the Giotteschi survived, as usual, till late in the fifteenth century, and a Madonna, painted by a Gentile da Urbino in 1497, preserved in the sacristy of S. Agostino at Pesaro, bears still some resemblance to the style of his celebrated namesake. Nay, the long sleepy eye of Raphael's early Madonnas, more especially her of the Cardellino, may be legitimately traced to that object of his youthful admiration, Gentile's Coronation of the Virgin, which transmits it from Giotto. And the same peculiarity may be noticed, even subsequently to Raphael's death, in the works of Spagna, his fellow-pupil under Perugino. So subtle and etherial is the transmission of influence, in art as in morals, through succeeding generations.

But I must draw to a conclusion.—Reviewing and summing up the preceding sketches of Giotto and his successors, we have seen the former adopting from Niccola Pisano, and giving its full value and expression to the fundamental principle of Christian Art, in the department of dramatic composition,—the latter, during the century subsequent to their master's death, devoting themselves to the culture of the garden which he had marked out and enclosed,

each tending some peculiar tree or flower, and many of them contributing new ones, fresh acquisitions either of elegance or power, to the general stock—although it must be confessed that these contributions were very unequally appreciated. Neither the daring originality of Cavallini, for instance, nor the spiritualised expression of his Madonnas found many immediate imitators; the Christian chivalry and heroism of the biographer of S. George and S. Lucia is unparalleled in painting south of the Apennines,—even his composition stands by itself, solitary and peculiar in its concentration and extent; while the union of religious feeling and glowing colouring which distinguishes the works of Don Lorenzo is shared only by Gentile da Fabriano among the Giotteschi.—On the other hand, the grace of Taddeo Gaddi and his son Angelo,—the design, foreshortening, the technical resource and admirable delineation of nature of Stefano,—the majesty, beauty, and noble colouring of Maso or Giottino,—the elegance and naiveté of Giovanni da Milano,—the copious and fluent composition of his successor at Assisi,—the fertile imagination and sympathy with all that is rich, beautiful, and characteristic in nature, of Antonio Veneziano and Starnina,—the cyclic and philosophical spirit of Spinello,—the courtesy and the softened and more harmonious landscape of Gentile da Fabriano—were qualities infinitely more congenial, the legitimate and cherished births of the dramatic principle, and hailed with rapture as such by contemporary artists in every individual instance,

each becoming at once consolidated into the general platform of improvement, on which Masolino, Masaccio, and Uccello first, and in due succession Benozzo Gozzoli, Filippo Lippi, Domenico del Ghirlandajo, Andrea del Sarto, Luca Signorelli, Leonard da Vinci, Raphael and Michael Angelo were destined to rear the stately theatre of Florentine and Dramatic Art.

The Giotteschi, in a word, fulfilled their mission nobly, and had left little or nothing undone that the original impulse of their patriarch implied, and that the imperfect means of improvement within their reach allowed, when the influence of Ghiberti intervened to start them afresh, with a new name, new models, new aspirations, on a new and more vigorous though less elevated, less Christian career. We may part with them on "Soracte's ridge," as they flock towards Rome—the temple henceforth of their idolatry—the Rome of the Cæsars, not of the successors of S. Peter.

END OF VOL. II.

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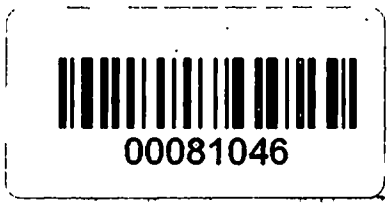
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